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1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)			2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects				
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ Scott K. Gibson III, USAF				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Attn: ATZL-SWD-GD 1 Reynolds Ave Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1352			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4				
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This study assesses the reliability of France as an American military ally. Its focus is upon French cooperation in four recent military operations: Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I), and Operations Turquoise/Support Hope. Using the reliability criteria of political rhetoric, interaction between American and French forces, and the accomplishment of military objectives, the study concludes that France is likely to cooperate militarily when she agrees with both the military operation's objectives and means of achieving them and when the operation's sponsor is either France, herself, or a supranational organization, such as the United Nations. The study concludes the primary cause of a lack of military cooperation is France's perception of disregard for her freedom of action. The study further concludes that in the decision to cooperate, France's decision making conforms with the Balance of Threat Theory of International Relations. The theory specifies that confronted with two threats, the country will respond to the greater of the two. As the common leader of combined military operations, the United States occasionally poses a threat to France's freedom of action, thereby influencing the extent of France's cooperation which follows.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS United States, France, Military Cooperation, Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, Operation Turquoise, Operation Support Hope			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 107	
16. PRICE CODE				
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unlimited	

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FRANCE AS AN AMERICAN MILITARY ALLY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

SCOTT K. GIBSON III, MAJ, USAF
M.A., Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 1989

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1996

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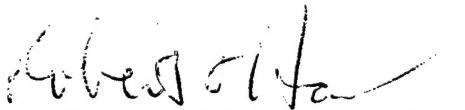
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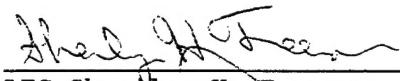
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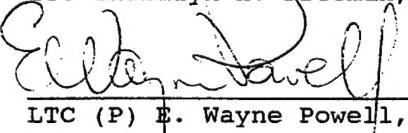
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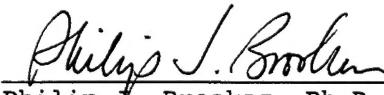
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ABSTRACT

FRANCE AS AN AMERICAN MILITARY ALLY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS by MAJ
Scott K. Gibson III, USAF, 107 pages.

This study assesses the reliability of France as an American military ally. Its focus is upon French cooperation in four recent military operations: Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I), and Operations Turquoise/Support Hope.

Using the reliability criteria of political rhetoric, interaction between American and French forces, and the accomplishment of military objectives, the study concludes that France is likely to cooperate militarily when she agrees with both the military operation's objectives and means of achieving them and when the operation's sponsor is either France, herself, or a supranational organization, such as the United Nations. The study concludes the primary cause of a lack of military cooperation is France's perception of disregard for her freedom of action. The study further concludes that in the decision to cooperate, France's decision making conforms with the Balance of Threat Theory of International Relations. The theory specifies that confronted with two threats, the country will respond to the greater of the two. As the common leader of combined military operations, the United States occasionally poses a threat to France's freedom of action, thereby influencing the extent of France's cooperation which follows.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of several individuals in completing this thesis. The chairman of my research committee LTC Robert Hahn II, USA provided me clear and concise guidance, as well as unsolicited material which was of great value. LTC Sherilyn Freeman, USA and LTC E. Wayne (P) Powell, USA the reader and visiting faculty member, respectively, were generous with their time and guidance. Dr. Glen Robertson's instruction throughout the year in the evolution of modern warfare gave me considerable insight into our military relations with the French and military history, in general. Maj James Lunsford, USA provided concise instruction in our core tactics course thereby affording me the extra time necessary to do the research for this thesis. The Combined Arms Research Librarians, especially Joanne Knight, John Rodgers and Rusty Rafferty, routinely provided me better material than that which I requested. Karin Brightwell and Helen Davis in the Graduate Degree Program Office kindly instructed me in the finer details of administration. The Director of the Graduate Degree Program Dr. Philip Brooks subtly encouraged all of us throughout the year to stay the course. Last but most important is my former supervisor at U.S. European Command, Col Gerald Jeanes, USAF. Without his support, I would not have attended Command and General Staff College, written this thesis, or received a Master of Military Art and Science degree.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To what extent will France be a reliable American military ally in the future? That is the primary question this thesis will attempt to answer. Secondarily, it will attempt to identify the conditions under which France is likely to act as a reliable American military ally in the future, as well as the conditions under which she is not likely to do so.

This study of the reliability of France as an American military ally begins with a brief look at American-French military interaction from the American Revolution through interaction following France's withdrawal from NATO's military committee. From there, the study examines in greater detail American-French military cooperation in four recent military operations: Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, and the relief effort in Rwanda. In each of the four cases, the study will identify the France's key national interests associated with the operation and test the applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory to France's decision to cooperate with the United States. The study will also assess France's reliability in terms of political rhetoric, the nature of the specific military interaction, and the degree to which the objective of the military operation was accomplished. The study will conclude with an estimation of the conditions under which the French are likely to

cooperate militarily with the Americans in the future, and the conditions under which they are not likely to do so.

In assessing France's reliability as a military ally, an understanding of the nature of American-French military cooperation throughout history is essential. Such understanding sheds light upon the motives for past cooperation and suggests how and when military cooperation will take place in the future. A detailed study of past American-French military cooperation is not possible in a thesis of limited length such as this.

However, Chapter 2 provides a summary of the impact of seven military events which shaped American-French military cooperation which followed. These events include the American Revolution, the French Revolution, World War I, World War II, Dien Bien Phu, the Suez Canal, and finally, France's withdrawal from the military committee of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Chapters 3-6 provide a more detailed study of American-French cooperation in four military operations since 1986. The first case involves Operation El Dorado Canyon, the American bombing of Libya in April 1986 in which American officials sought French cooperation which did not materialize. The second case involves Operation Desert Shield/Storm in which American and French military forces, among others, participated from August 1990 to March 1991 in ejecting Iraq's armed forces from Kuwait. Shortly thereafter, American and French military forces cooperated once again in Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I) from April through September 1991. This case primarily involved the provision of humanitarian assistance to Kurds repressed by what remained of the Iraqi Army. Finally, the chapter examines the American-French

military cooperation which took place during relief efforts in Rwanda during the summer of 1994. This effort consisted of both American Operation Support Hope and French Operation Turquoise, which were basically parallel operations. This combined military effort, too, had a humanitarian focus as it followed large-scale, inter-tribal massacres in a sub-Saharan African country.

Methodology and Cases

Each of the four cases was chosen for specific reasons. First, Operation El Dorado Canyon demonstrates French reliability within the context of a bilateral, combined (American-French) military operation and a unilateral American operation, as well. American military officials first proposed a combined military operation with the French against Libya. When the French rejected this proposal, the Americans then proposed the unilateral operation. Operation Desert Shield/Storm, on the other hand, illustrates French reliability within the context of a multinational operation in which France and the United States clearly had a common objective, namely the maintenance of unrestricted access to Gulf Oil, and in which the United States was clearly the "lead" country. Next, Operation Provide Comfort depicts French reliability within the context of a multinational operation in which the common American-French interest is more subtle. Finally, the Rwanda relief effort represents French reliability within the context of a multinational, humanitarian operation led by the French.

In the examination of each of these four cases, France's reliability will be assessed in terms of three criteria: political

rhetoric, interaction of American and French military forces, and the degree to which the particular operation met its objectives.

The examination of political rhetoric associated with each operation focuses upon comments by key political figures in each country. What, for instance, did the presidents, secretary of state or foreign minister, and secretary of defense or defense minister have to say before, during, and after the operation? What was the nature of the comments? Did the comments suggest mutual support or antagonism?

In analyzing the interaction of American and French military forces, the nature and degree of cooperation will be assessed. For instance, did the two forces work unilaterally toward a common objective? Or, did the two forces share assets, such as supplies and airlift, in pursuit of a common objective? Were command and control issues resolved with or without much friction?

In examining the success of each operation, this thesis will seek to identify whether the interaction between the two forces was constructive or destructive. Did American-French antagonism, for instance, interfere with mission accomplishment? Or, was the constructive nature of the interaction such as to promote the accomplishment of the mission?

Balance of Threat Theory

As with the seven historical instances of military interaction over the past two centuries and the four military operations since 1986, the question of the extent to which the French will act as a reliable military ally in the future is largely a question of whether French military cooperation follows any particular pattern of international

relations. This thesis will test the applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory to French military cooperation.

The Balance of Threat Theory specifies that a country confronted with two threats will respond to the greater threat.¹ A key to understanding French military cooperation with foreign powers or the lack of such cooperation is that especially since World War II, France has considered the United States both an ally and an enemy. Consider, for instance, the words of President De Gaulle. In 1964 he stated that France was "violently opposed to the blatant American imperialism now rampant in the world. France will continue to attack and to oppose the United States in Latin America, in Asia, and in Africa."² These are not words of friendship or cooperation. They do, however, make clear that from the French perspective, the United States sometimes poses a threat to French interests.

The head of French Intelligence until the early 1980's Count de Marenches candidly expressed his view of America as being both an enemy and an ally. With regard to America and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, de Marenches specified, "neither offered Europeans a fundamentally healthy relationship."³ Due to their relatively large stature, both tended to overshadow and domineer France.

France's foreign policy, especially after World War II, suggests that France views freedom of action as one of her primary interests. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies threatened Western Europe, to include France. But the second threat was America. America's influential role in NATO and European affairs came at France's expense. Accordingly, the French confronted both Soviet and American threats throughout the Cold War. In contemplating military

cooperation with foreign powers, France did so based upon which threat was deemed the more serious at the time.

Delimitations

With regard to delimitations, the primary delimitation of the thesis is its scope. In assessing the reliability of France as an American military ally, the thesis will concentrate only upon the four military operations since 1986.

The secondary delimitation of the thesis is its classification: unclassified. While more insight could have been gleaned through the examination of relevant classified material, the resulting thesis, necessarily classified, would be less accessible to those interested in reviewing it. Additionally, producing a classified thesis would have required the use of equipment cleared for processing classified material. Therefore, classified material is not contained in the thesis.

Limitations

With regard to limitations, the thesis is primarily limited by the restricted availability of some key documentation. First, some primary source documentation regarding French relations with America is either unavailable or classified. For instance, specific French foreign policy for dealing with America is of restricted distribution. After all, American knowledge of the details of such strategy would give America an advantage in the realm of international politics. Additionally, the prudent statesman usually refrains from putting on paper highly controversial material which, if discovered at a later, inopportune time, could prove embarrassing. This limitation, however,

is not insurmountable. Alternative sources of written material, both primary and secondary, are available.

Key Terms

An explanation of key terms and concepts used throughout the thesis is essential to the reader's understanding. Precise definitions provided at the outset of the study can reduce some of the imprecision inherent in an assessment of reliability which, in this case, is based upon both objective and subjective criteria.

Accordingly, seven key terms are defined below.

Bilateral. Affecting or undertaken by two sides equally; binding on both parties: a *bilateral agreement*; *bilateral negotiations*.⁴

Combined operation. An operation conducted by forces of two or more allied nations acting together for the accomplishment of a single mission.⁵

Joint operations. A general term to describe military actions conducted by joint forces, or by Service forces in relationships (e.g., support, coordinating authority), which, of themselves, do not create joint forces.⁶

Multinational operations. A collective term to describe military actions conducted by forces of two or more nations typically organized within the structure of a coalition or alliance.⁷

Reliable. Capable of being relied upon; dependable.⁸

Tactical control. Command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability of forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed and, usually, local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish missions

or tasks assigned. Tactical control is inherent in operational control. Tactical control may be delegated to, and exercised at any level at or below the level of combatant command. Also called TACON.⁹

Unilateral. Performed or undertaken by only one side:
unilateral disarmament.¹⁰

Significance

The significance of this thesis is twofold. First, American and French military forces have interacted throughout America's history. This thesis will analyze France's motivation for opting to cooperate, or not to cooperate, with American military forces in the past. Second, and more importantly, the thesis will offer a framework through which policy makers can predict the likelihood of French military cooperation under specific circumstances.

In conclusion, this study of France's reliability as an American military ally commences with a summary of military interaction from the American Revolution through American-French interaction following France's withdrawal from NATO's military committee. Next, the study provides a detailed look at American-French military cooperation from 1986 through 1994 in four specific military operations: Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, and the relief effort in Rwanda. The study identifies France's key national interests and tests the applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory in each of the four cases. The study weighs France's reliability based upon associated political rhetoric, the nature of the specific military interaction, and the degree to which the objective of the military operation was accomplished. The study concludes by identifying

the conditions under which the French are likely to cooperate militarily with the Americans in the future, and the conditions under which they are not likely to do so.

Endnotes

¹Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power" in Understanding International Relations: The Value of Alternative Lenses, eds. Joseph J. Collins, Daniel J. Kaufman and Thomas F. Schneider (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994), 527.

² Frank Costigliola, France and the United States: The Cold Alliance Since World War II (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 140.

³Count de Marenches and David A. Andelman, The Fourth World War: Diplomacy and Espionage in the Age of Terrorism (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1992), 236.

⁴"American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 3d ed., s.v. "Bilateral."

⁵"Approved DoD Terminology (CD ROM) (Ft Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 1995), s.v. "Combined operation."

⁶"Approved DoD Terminology (CD ROM) (Ft Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 1995), s.v. "Joint operations."

⁷"Joint Publication 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations (CD ROM) (Ft Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 1995), s.v. "Multinational operations."

⁸"American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 3d ed., s.v. "Reliable."

⁹Approved DoD Terminology (CD ROM) (Ft Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 1995), s.v. "Tactical control."

¹⁰"American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 3d ed., s.v. "Unilateral."

CHAPTER 2

THE BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN-FRENCH MILITARY COOPERATION

France's reliability as an American military ally in the future is shaped by past military events involving the Americans and the French. The armed forces of the two nations have cooperated in military operations, or have sought one another's cooperation, since the American Revolution. The nature of the cooperation, however, has not always been amicable. Seven key military events have molded the current nature of the American-French tropism toward military cooperation. These include the American Revolution, the French Revolution, World War I, World War II, the Suez Canal affair, the fall of French forces at Dien Bien Phu, and France's withdrawal from the integrated military component of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The American Revolution

The first defining event, French assistance to America during the American Revolution, is one which Americans have not forgotten. As recently as 1 February 1996 during a state dinner at the White House for French President Chirac, President Clinton cited French military cooperation during the American Revolution as pivotal in American victory against the British. In fact, the President said, "So it is not an exaggeration to say that the American people owe our liberty to France."¹ With regard to specific French military cooperation during the war, President Clinton specified, "Dozens of ships carrying cannon,

rifles, mortars and clothing crossed the Atlantic to supply those who were fighting here for our independence."²

For many Americans, the name "Lafayette" still represents the vital assistance France provided to the inchoate American nation in the face of its conflict with Great Britain. Lafayette, of course, was the French general who sailed to America and provided enthusiastic support to General Washington in the American Revolution from 1775 to 1783. Lafayette participated in the critical Battle of Yorktown in 1781 when British General Cornwallis surrendered. In fact, when American soldiers arrived in France during World War I, one proclaimed, "Lafayette, we are here!" in recognition of the debt owed France for her critical aid.³

French assistance during the American Revolution was not, however, altruistic. Nor was American solicitation of French assistance the result of any sentimental friendship with the French. Practical concerns--French competition with the English, and American need for a sponsor--drove French and American decisions to become military allies. Had England not been involved in the New World, the colony might have been French and the despot King Louis XVI, as opposed to King George. Whatever the rationale for the alliance, French assistance indisputably contributed to the American victory in the American Revolution.

French military assistance took the form of naval forces, land forces, logistical support, and loans. French land forces played a decisive role in the Battle of Yorktown, the last great battle for the British. French naval forces played a pivotal role in harassing English warships as far south as the Antilles and in preventing their landing in American ports. France's Toulon Fleet took the lead in French naval operations, landing at the mouth of the Delaware River on 7 July 1778.⁴

In the end, French military cooperation with American military forces resulted in the defeat of the British by 1783 and the birth of the United States of America. The victory served both the Americans who gained their independence and the French who provided their British rivals a severe setback. It was to be the high point of American-French military cooperation.

The French Revolution

The French Revolution which began in 1789 is the second key event in the American-French military relationship. From the economic perspective, the American Revolution was an indirect cause of the French Revolution. In assisting America, France expended substantial resources. However, the French treasury was already strained prior to expenditures on America. As a result of the desperate fiscal status, King Louis XVI assembled the States-General with the intention of having it take the necessary measures to raise the needed money. Instead, the States-General addressed what it viewed as the more compelling issue, the need for political and social reforms. The ensuing, violent upheaval initially resulted in a series of political compromises by the King and, eventually, in the King's execution.

Toward the end of the Revolution, the scale of the executions began to concern the Americans. While Thomas Jefferson, for instance, contended that bloodshed was an unfortunate necessity in casting off the yoke of tyranny, others insisted that the level of violence on the part of the French revolutionaries had become unwarranted. Americans who had appreciated the French during the American Revolution began to have

their doubts as stories of the French Revolution continued to make their way to America.

Politically, French revolutionaries drew inspiration from what they viewed as kindred spirits among the American revolutionaries. Louis XVI was to the French revolutionaries what George III was to the Americans. Just as the American Revolution resulted in the production of the Constitution, the French Revolution yielded the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Lafayette consulted Thomas Jefferson regarding the latter document. American influence on the French Revolution is also seen in the fact that the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen contains elements of some of the American states' constitutions.

In his toast to President Clinton during a state dinner at the White House on 1 February 1996 President Chirac specifically cited the American influence on the French Revolution. In the words of French President Chirac:

Now, Mr President, you may not know this but when Lafayette came back to France from America, he hung above his desk two identical picture frames. And in one of them, there was the Constitution of the United States. But in the other one, there was nothing. It was empty. And when people said, now, why is this? Lafayette would say, wait and you will see. And the explanation came in 1791 when France, in her turn, gave herself a Constitution. And so our two Constitutions were there, side by side, hung over Lafayette's desk, just as our two countries find each other side by side today to defend the ideas to which we attach the same great importance.⁵

In the end, America provided nothing in the way of direct military assistance to France. The key American contribution was, instead, ideological. And as President Chirac indicated, the French viewed the contribution as significant.

World War I

World War I which lasted from 1914 to 1918 marked the third key event in the background of American-French military cooperation. Ironically, although American-French relations were generally quite positive both at the beginning of and throughout the war, relations began to crumble at the war's conclusion. As it would again in World War II, the problem centered upon how to go about forging the peace after the war.

American assistance to the French during World War I actually preceded America's official entry into the conflict. In August 1914, Americans began shipping hospital supplies to France. Americans helped in the establishment of several hospitals in France for the treatment of war casualties. The enormous flow of medical supplies from America by autumn 1914 necessitated the establishment of the American Clearing House, which served to facilitate the distribution of these supplies.⁶

In addition to medical supplies, American aviators found their way to France, as well. The Lafayette Squadron included American military aviators anxious to fly in combat against the Germans. While the overall contribution of air power to Allied victory during World War I was minimal compared to that of World War II, the risks undertaken by these American fighter pilots on France's behalf were no less grave.

Upon America's entry into the war, military assistance became more coordinated. The Frenchman Andre Tardieu reported to America as the High Commissioner for France to the United States. His principal mission was to manage the military supply effort. Under his supervision, America sent 170 million 75mm artillery shells and five million tons of food to France. France was then able to supply the United States Army in Europe with a portion of its tanks, planes, heavy artillery, and artillery shells.⁷

American-French relations began to disintegrate at the conclusion of the war. The problem lay in conflicting views of the postwar world order. President Wilson's view of how to restore Europe after the war was distinctly different from that of President Clemenceau.

President Wilson's plans for post-war Europe centered about his League of Nations, an international forum that, in theory, would prevent future wars. Wilson's plan was a theoretical one which assumed member countries would conduct themselves selflessly. In contrast, Georges Clemenceau's plans focused more upon post-war France than post-war Europe. Clemenceau envisioned enhancing French security through regional alliances.⁸ He did not trust Wilson's grand vision of an international forum. Nor was he favorably impressed by Wilson's political theory. Clemenceau dealt in political reality.

Wilson and Clemenceau also disagreed over how to deal with German territory following the war. Clemenceau favored occupation of Germany as far east as the Rhine River or the establishment in the Rhineland of a buffer state. Wilson firmly opposed this idea. Clemenceau, in turn, compromised and sought occupation of the Rhineland and the Saar for a period of fifteen years, after which a plebiscite would decide permanent ownership. In recognition of France's concession, Britain and America then signed a treaty of mutual assistance with France.⁹

Much to Clemenceau's consternation, the return for his concession over the Rhineland did not materialize. The U.S. Senate failed to ratify the treaty. Clemenceau and many French citizens felt as if they had been duped by the Americans. These events served to damage trust between the two nations.

As a result, American-French relations, which had started the war on such a high note, ended on a note of bitterness. The French considered the Americans to be meddlers with little understanding of European political realities, a theme which a later French President, de Gaulle, was to echo years later. The Americans, on the other hand, wondered what they had gained in exchange for the number of American lives lost.

World War II

The passage of about twenty years marked the beginning of the fourth, and the most significant military event in contemporary American-French military relations. As was the case with World War I, American-French relations were worse by the conclusion of World War II than at its start. But unlike World War I, political infighting between the Americans and the French during the course of the war itself was remarkably intense.

The vicious and shocking German defeat of French forces at the outset of the war and subsequent German occupation of portions of France left an emotional scar upon France. Compensating for that defeat and re-establishing France's prestige, the immediate goals of General de Gaulle as early as 1940, persist as objectives to this day that continue to shape French foreign policy.

Much of the political sideshow between America and France during World War II focused upon the proper role and position of General de Gaulle. While the British counseled American recognition of de Gaulle as the provisional head of the French government, the Americans were opposed and withheld such recognition until late in the war. In fact, American recognition of de Gaulle as the leader of France did not come until October 1944, a mere six months prior to the end of the war.¹⁰

Part of President Roosevelt's rationale for withholding such recognition was that de Gaulle might not actually represent the popular choice for head of state among the citizens of France. So convinced was President Roosevelt that de Gaulle was not the correct choice to lead France that he encouraged rival French leaders. Principal among them was Henri Honore Giraud. When the Committee of National Liberation was born in Algeria in 1943, its co-presidents were de Gaulle and Giraud. The animosity between the two was mutual and substantial. Giraud was eventually to fall by the wayside.

The other part of Roosevelt's reluctance to recognize de Gaulle had to do with Roosevelt's view of France. Roosevelt did not accept France as an ally in the war. His perception of the French was that under the Vichy regime, life in France was not substantially different than it was before the war. Worse, the French enthusiastically complied with Hitler's wishes. Roosevelt, in fact, characterized the French as "associates of aggressors." Accordingly, he wanted to remove France from the ranks of the world powers and place her, instead, among the ranks of such countries as Belgium and Holland after the war.¹¹ In the postwar years, de Gaulle would remember America's reluctance to recognize both himself and France, a factor which surely contributed to further friction between the two countries after the war.

De Gaulle's objective of recreating France as a major military power so that she might, once again, be among the world's leaders may have been what so alienated Americans at the time. From the American perspective, French disqualification for membership among the world's great powers was clearly demonstrated by France's inability to defend herself

against the Germans. That France considered herself within grasp of world greatness struck some Americans as impractical and unrealistic.

De Gaulle's view of the war as a trivial part of French history was another cause of aggravation for the Americans. If the war were truly but a trivial piece of history, then American efforts in the Allied victory had, by definition, to be of little importance, as well. By de Gaulle's formula, France owed no great thanks to the Americans. This struck the Americans as falsely pompous and ungrateful.

The conclusion of World War II marked the end of a period of important military cooperation between America and France. But the animosity which had developed by the end of the war was to grow worse as General de Gaulle became President with memories, not always pleasant, of his experiences with the Americans during World War II.

France's chief national interest born of the World War II experience would be her freedom of action. That interest would play a major role years later in American-French military cooperation in Operation El Dorado Canyon, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, and the Rwandan relief effort.

Dien Bien Phu

The 56 day siege of Dien Bien Phu which resulted in the defeat for French forces by the Vietnamese on 7 May 1954 marked the fifth defining event in American-French military cooperation. Despite the considerable amount of military assistance the United States provided France throughout her Indochinese crisis, the American decision not to provide crucial aid during this battle clearly damaged the potential for future American-French military cooperation.

The battle itself actually had its genesis in the conclusion of World War II when President Truman made clear that he supported Vietnamese bids for self-government. The French responded by authorizing the Vietnamese some autonomy. The Viet Minh, however, considered the degree of autonomy inadequate and, therefore, attacked French interests in Hanoi in December 1946.¹²

American policy at the time was to remain out of the Vietnamese-French conflict. However, the policy changed upon Communist Chinese intervention on behalf of the Viet Minh. Upon this significant development, American foreign policy experts now viewed the conflict as part of the Cold War and deemed assistance of the French against the Viet Minh as logical.¹³

American assistance to French military efforts against the Viet Minh covered 80 percent of French military costs by 1954.¹⁴ American economic assistance, however, was not tantamount to French victory. In the spring of 1954, French forces found themselves surrounded at a place called Dien Bien Phu that was to mark the end of the French struggle in Vietnam.

Descriptions of the French establishment of a military encampment at Dien Bien Phu suggest the French did not foresee being surrounded by a large enemy force equipped with heavy artillery. The concentration of French forces in a relative lowland gave surrounding enemy forces a marked advantage. When the fighting began, the French realized the extent of their disadvantage, especially their vulnerability to enemy artillery strikes. The Viet Minh pressed their advantage, and the French plight became desperate despite heroic French efforts which included airborne jumps into Dien Bien Phu by replacements who had had no previous airborne training.

Officials of the French government indicated to President Eisenhower that direct American military intervention would be necessary to reverse the situation.¹⁵ The specific request was for close air support and air interdiction in and around Dien Bien Phu by the U.S. Air Force.¹⁶ President Eisenhower did not provide the requested military assistance.

President Eisenhower's evolving foreign policy seems to account for his refusal to provide the military cooperation urgently sought by the French. While in 1952 he advocated the reversal of communist gains worldwide, his subsequent policy toward the communists evolved into something considerably less confrontational. By 1956, for instance, he advocated a policy of peace and relaxation of Cold War tension. French troops at Dien Bien Phu were victims of that altered foreign policy.

In the absence of requested American military cooperation, French forces fell to the Viet Minh on 7 May 1954 after a 56-day siege. Those Frenchmen who survived the fight spent long and difficult periods as prisoners of war. The lack of American cooperation engendered bitterness among some that was to influence American-French military cooperation in the future.

The Suez Canal

The Suez Canal marked the sixth major event to influence American-French military cooperation. The controversy began in June 1956 when President Nasser of Egypt announced his decision not to renew the Suez Canal Company's concession upon its expiration. Shortly after the last British troops had departed their nearby base, President Nasser ordered the seizure of the canal on 26 July 1956.

The British and French submitted the matter to the United Nations Security Council on 23 September 1956. On 31 October 1956, British and French planes bombed Egyptian airfields. Shortly thereafter, British paratroopers landed at Port Said with the objective of regaining control of the Suez Canal. Moscow, in turn, threatened the use of atomic weapons against Britain and France. Moscow's public reaction to the crisis generated an American response.

But America did not share the British and French colonial interests. Secretary Dulles correctly foresaw the increasing importance of the Middle East given its enormous reserves of oil. Accordingly, he did not want to alienate the Arabs by joining the ranks of two European colonialists and Israel. Dulles attempted to draw out negotiations over the canal in hopes that in the interim the British and French would reconsider their use of armed force.¹⁷

The British and French were not persuaded by the American position. On 5 November 1956, they invaded Egypt and drew close to the canal. Secretary Dulles was well aware that both Britain and France risked losing a great deal should they be unable to recover the canal. However, he refused to budge. Dulles reiterated his conviction that supporting European colonialism would, in turn, serve chiefly to encourage the Soviets to colonize the Middle East and Africa over the long-term. While damaging relations with Britain and France would be the short-term cost, Dulles insisted that in the long run the correct choice was not to side with Britain and France.

Eisenhower was persuaded. Accordingly, America opposed the two European countries in the United Nations. Furthermore, America refused to support the British pound at a point in time when the British economy was

already weak. Finally, the Eisenhower Administration refused to intervene when the Arabs interrupted the supply of oil to Britain and France.¹⁸ In the end, plans for a British-French military retaking of the canal collapsed. Egypt retained control of the canal.

The British reacted with disappointment. The French, by contrast, were bitter both toward Britain and America. French diplomats blamed the debacle squarely on the Americans. French acrimony led to a conviction that France could not afford to depend upon America, especially where military affairs were concerned. This conviction regarding her vulnerability contributed to France's resolve to pursue an independent nuclear program with which to protect herself.

The true rationale for the inordinately bitter reaction by the French toward the Americans might have had less to do with Egypt than with Algeria. Coincident with the Suez Canal crisis, the French were confronting a crisis of greater proportions in Algeria where an armed rebellion against French authority was underway. It was the French hope that a defeat of Nasser over the Suez Canal issue might well result in his fall from power and, with that, the end of the Egyptian aid to the rebels.¹⁹ In short, after the setbacks of World War II, the French empire was now collapsing. The French saw the Americans as encouraging the collapse.

Partial Withdrawal from NATO

De Gaulle's withdrawal of France from the integrated military structure of NATO in 1966 marked the seventh key event in American-French military cooperation. The withdrawal resulted generally from a French perception of inadequate leverage and control within the organization.

De Gaulle's specific concerns with military integration in NATO were four. First, he feared America might attempt to involve France in future wars in which she did not wish to participate. Second, NATO officials had rejected de Gaulle's proposal of three-way leadership of NATO in which America, Great Britain and France would be the three primary leaders, as opposed to what France perceived as NATO's two-way leadership dominated by America and Britain. Third, de Gaulle generally disliked military integration, the key military concept which America advocated in NATO. Finally, de Gaulle was still resentful of what he perceived as American and British domination of Allied affairs during World War II and anticipated more of the same if France remained a full member of NATO.²⁰

Another factor prompting de Gaulle's decision was his calculation regarding what would happen in the event of a Soviet attack upon Western Europe. De Gaulle knew that one requirement for the defense of Germany was the defense of France, as well. In other words, France's withdrawal from NATO would not be tantamount to NATO's exclusion of France from its umbrella of defense.

Immediately after France's withdrawal, NATO adopted several courses of action which the French had previously blocked. Among these was the expansion of NATO's role from exclusively military to both military and diplomatic, thereby establishing NATO as the West's focal point for detente. While still a member of the integrated military component of NATO, France had resisted NATO's expansion into diplomacy for fear that such expansion would further diminish France's role in European affairs.²¹ France resented the fact that as its influence in Europe decreased, American influence increased.

Following the French decision to withdraw from NATO's integrated military structure, NATO headquarters and American forces departed France. The Americans removed 26,000 military personnel and 37,000 dependents from a total of 30 military bases in France.²² French officials extended unofficial invitations to reopen such bases in the event of military emergency.

Many Americans reacted with anger to the French withdrawal. The Secretary of State reportedly asked de Gaulle if the requirement to remove American soldiers from France included the bodies buried in military cemeteries, a sarcastic reference to American soldiers who had died both in World War I and World War II on France's behalf. An even stronger reaction came from the American ambassador to NATO who suggested that in any future wars fought in Europe, America would simply seize whatever military installations it needed in France.²³

France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command harmed American-French relations. However, the relationship during the period leading up to France's withdrawal was already a negative one marked by suspicion, frustration, and resentment. France's withdrawal also caused many Americans to believe that in time of war, France might not be relied upon as a military ally.

Hard feelings aside, the reality of the threat from the Warsaw Pact dictated some degree of military cooperation between France and NATO following France's withdrawal. Accordingly, French and American military planners assigned to NATO actually maintained close, albeit not formal, coordination from the time of France's partial withdrawal until the collapse of the former Soviet Union and its empire in 1989.

French cooperation in the years following France's partial withdrawal from NATO, however, extended beyond unofficial coordination of military plans. In fact, Robert Gates, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, claims that France played an important role in NATO's triumph in the Cold War. For instance, while President Mitterand did not share President Reagan's economic philosophy, he was nonetheless strongly anti-Soviet. Accordingly, the French strongly resisted Soviet hegemony, especially in areas close to former French colonies.²⁴

Moreover, it was the French intelligence service which in December 1984 proposed the publication of damaging, classified information which demonstrated ongoing Soviet theft of Western technology. Vice President Bush and President Mitterand became personally involved in the effort. Its purpose was to highlight the threat that the Soviet Union posed to the West. In the end, cooperative efforts such as these were to prove too much for the Soviet Union.²⁵

The figure on the following page summarizes the impact of the seven major military events in American-French military cooperation from 1777 through 1966. Each event is described in terms of its resulting impact upon relations--agreeable, mixed or antagonistic--between the two countries.

In conclusion, history demonstrates that France's record of reliability as an American military ally is a mixed one. The record shows France both as a critical ally, as in the American Revolution, and as a disgruntled ally, as in World War II. The record also demonstrates the negative impact of American failure to provide crucial military cooperation in such French endeavors as Dien Bien Phu and the Suez Canal affair. Not

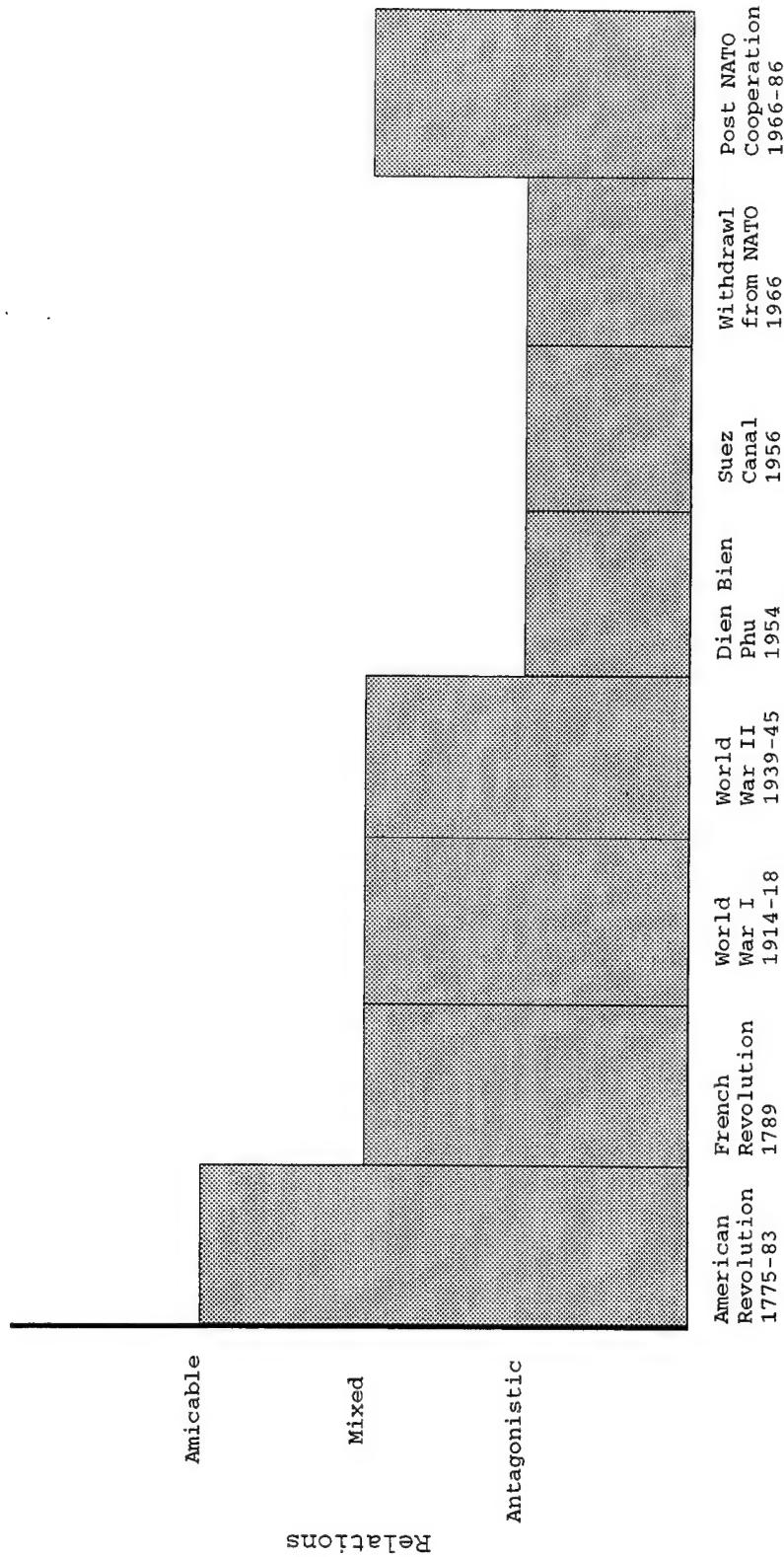


Figure 1. Impact of Military Events on Relations, 1775-1986

surprisingly, French reliability in operations following French withdrawal from NATO's military committee demonstrates a similarly diverse range.

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CHAPTER 3

OPERATION EL DORADO CANYON

Libyan-sponsored terrorism against American targets offered an opportunity for American-French military cooperation in April 1986, the first of the four detailed case studies. In contrast with Libyan-sponsored terrorism directed at American targets from 1980 through 1983, such terrorism increased markedly in both 1984 and 1985.¹ President Reagan decided that a military reaction would be prudent.

On 4 April 1986 a bomb weighing between 6.5 and 11 pounds exploded in a Berlin discotheque called "La Belle." As a result, walls within the disco collapsed and the building caught on fire. One U.S. serviceman died and about two hundred civilians were wounded. About five hundred customers were in the disco at the time of the explosion.² Intelligence indicated the Libyans were responsible. The La Belle Disco attack constituted the proximate, not the primary, cause for the American military reaction which followed.³

Type of Military Operation

In response, American military officials initially proposed to French military officials a combined (American-French) military operation directed at destabilizing the Qadhafi regime in Libya. The French rejected the proposal. Alternatively, the Americans proposed a unilateral military operation involving British and French cooperation in the form of authority to use U.S. Air Force aircraft based in England

and authority to fly through French airspace en route to targets in Libya, respectively. Despite initial indications of French support for the latter operation, French Prime Minister Chirac and President Mitterrand subsequently disapproved. In the end, the Americans conducted a unilateral, joint military operation called Operation El Dorado Canyon which included the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy. The operation targeted the frogman training facility at Sidi Bilal, the Azizia Barracks Compound (including Qadhafi's residence, a command and control residence, and some of the Jamahiriya Guards), and Tripoli International Airport in Libya.⁴

Associated French National Interests

Freedom of Action

The American request for French cooperation in military operations against Libya primarily affected three French national interests. These included freedom of action, Africa, and the security of French citizens from terrorism.

Modern French concerns with freedom of action center about World War II. After Germany destroyed the French forces in approximately six weeks, German forces then occupied France, thereby compounding the feeling of helplessness. Throughout the war, General De Gaulle fought with both Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt for recognition of Free French interests and Free French legitimacy. During the Cold War that followed, France resented what it viewed as American efforts to destroy the French colonial empire. France viewed America's refusal to lend critical assistance at Dien Bien Phu and American interference in the British-French-Israeli effort at Suez as proof of

American opposition to French freedom of action. Later, when France viewed her freedom of action as further compromised by being caught between two belligerent superpowers--America and the Soviet Union--France withdrew from NATO. Modern French history is replete with perceived threats to French freedom of action, hence France's concern for establishing and maintaining that freedom.

Africa

The French national interest in Africa stems from the many former French colonies there. These include Cameroon, Togo, Madagascar, the Congo, Ghana, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Chad, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal. Further north, the French maintain close, although not necessarily amicable, relations with Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.

In view of the large number of nations in which she yields considerable influence, France views French speaking Africa as a French sphere of influence. Accordingly, she regards with some suspicion the influence wielded by other foreign nations, especially the Western nations, within that sphere of influence. As an example of French resistance to foreign influences other than her own in French speaking Africa, an editorial appearing in an April 1986 edition of Le Figaro specified, "It is in the interest of the French-speaking Third World for us to help it develop in the language which introduced it to development. It is in our interest for all French-speaking countries to join together to form a bulwark against the universalization of English."⁵

Following the long and bitter War of Independence from 1954 through 1962, Algeria gained her independence from France. The war was costly in terms of lives and especially bitterly fought. The war had also spawned two French military revolts against President de Gaulle who moved to put the question of Algerian independence to an Algerian vote.

Because of the severe turbulence caused by the war and the French military mutiny against de Gaulle, France adopted a new, more conciliatory foreign policy toward Africa at the war's conclusion. In fact, it specifically sought to encourage peace and friendship between France and Africa.⁶

Passive French sponsorship of a raid against an African nation, such as Libya, would have contradicted post-Algerian French policy. Although Libya was not a French colony, the Libyan population is primarily Muslim, as are the populations of neighboring, former French colonies. Hence, Libya and Francophone Africa are linked. Cooperating in a military attack against Libya would not, therefore, have been consistent with the French policy of promoting peace and goodwill with the Africans.

Security Against Terrorism

The third French national interest, security of French citizens from terrorism, was becomingly increasingly important to French officials as terrorist attacks against French citizens began to increase. Ironically, on 13 April 1986, two days before the American raid on Libya, French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua had this to say about terrorism:

Terrorism is a worldwide plague. I think that all countries are threatened and, unfortunately, France now ranks among the favorite

targets. So, we must be ready to fight against this plague. The first way, of course, is coordination and concerted action with all other counties hit by this plague.⁷

The Interior Minister's comments were prompted in part by costly terrorist attacks on French interests in the preceding year. Terrorists perpetrated seven major attacks on French interests during 1985, destroying both French lives and property.

On 3 January 1985, terrorists attacked the residences of the French consul general and the American consul general in Frankfurt. The attackers used gasoline bottles and paint bottles in their attack. No one was injured. The Red Army Faction subsequently claimed responsibility.⁸

On 25 January 1985, terrorists assassinated General Rene Audran. Audran was a senior official in France's Defense Ministry. Three gunmen assaulted the general as he was parking his vehicle in front of his home in suburban Paris. He died of eight gunshot wounds. The French group Action Direct and Germany's Red Army Faction claimed responsibility for the act.⁹

On 11 March 1985, a series of bombs in Portugal targeted several nationalities, to include the French. Bombs exploded at the facilities of Credit Franco-Portugais, Newstead Porter, and Credity Lyonnaise (a French bank) in Lisbon.¹⁰

In Beirut on 22 March 1985, terrorists abducted three French diplomats--the secretary of the French cultural center, the master of ceremony at the French consulate, and vice consul of the French Embassy. Both the Islamic Jihad and the Lebanese Armed Faction claimed credit for the kidnappings.¹¹

On 25 March 1985 in Tripoli, terrorists abducted the cultural attaché at the French embassy. Lebanese Armed Factions subsequently claimed responsibility and demanded the release of two Lebanese Armed Factions members jailed in France and Italy.¹²

On 27 April 1985, a bomb planted under a nearby automobile exploded next to the International Monetary Fund headquarters building in Paris. The explosion injured a passerby and damaged the entrance to the building. Action Direct subsequently claimed to have carried out the bombing.¹³

The last major terrorist incident against the French in 1985 occurred on 22 May when gunmen abducted two French citizens in Lebanon. The first Frenchman was a researcher at the French Center for Studies and Research of the Contemporary Middle East. The second was a journalist. The Islamic Jihad subsequently claimed responsibility for the abductions.¹⁴

Despite these embarrassing terrorist attacks upon French citizens, President Mitterand did not view the American proposal for military operations favorably. He believed that an attack upon Libyan economic targets would be effective, whereas an attack on terrorist training facilities--as proposed by the Americans--would not.

Measures of Reliability

Three factors, namely political rhetoric, military interaction, and accomplishment of military objectives, serve in the assessment of France's reliability as an ally in Operation El Dorado Canyon. Political rhetoric was basically antagonistic, suggesting a low degree of reliability. Military interaction, however, was straightforward and

initially partially promising. In the end, political decisions prevailed and French cooperation was disapproved. As a result of France's refusal to cooperate, flying time for strike aircraft was doubled, possibly contributing to U.S. casualties and degraded mission accomplishment.

Political Rhetoric

Political rhetoric, both American and French, closely followed Operation El Dorado Canyon. The American rhetoric basically expressed disillusion at France's failure to cooperate. The French rhetoric criticized the American bombing of Libya as inappropriate.

Defense Secretary Weinberger specifically expressed disappointment with the casual manner in which the French refused to be of assistance, on the one hand, yet encouraged the Americans to "hit the Libyans hard," on the other. However, he resisted what he perceived as attempts by journalists to elicit a more emotional reaction.¹⁵

Two days after the bombing, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead had breakfast with French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond. Ambassador Whitehead indicated he was disappointed by France's refusal to authorize U.S. Air Force overflight of France. He added, however, that he was over his disappointment.¹⁶

Ambassador Vernon Walters subsequently appeared on French television and complained of French failure to recall the times that America had come to France's aid. A prominent New York Times columnist called for a boycott of French goods. Johnny Carson threw a pie in the face of an actor portraying a Frenchman.¹⁷ Overall, the immediate

American reaction was that the French had been both ungrateful and unreliable.

Prime Minister Chirac delivered France's critical response to the American attack upon Libya. On 15 April 1986 he made this address to the French National Assembly:

The American intervention against Libya which took place during the night was decided upon by the U.S. Government. Having been informed of the U.S. Government's intentions, France refused to let U.S. aircraft overfly her territory. It deplores the fact that the intolerable, inadmissible escalation of terrorism should lead to reprisal which itself sets off the cycle of violence again. As the foreign affairs minister made known during the meeting on political cooperation that was held at The Hague on Monday, 14 April--yesterday--France feels that the European states--if the Libyan Government were to carry out the threats it has made toward the southern European countries and explicitly toward Italy and Spain--that the European Governments, I repeat, should decide on an appropriate response upon which, as you will understand, I am not going to elaborate here and now, but which could only be firm.¹⁸

The political rhetoric following France's decision not to cooperate in America's operation against Libya was antagonistic. However, the antagonism, especially on the official American side, was restrained. Defense Secretary Weinberger, for instance, refrained from any emotional response to the French decision not to grant overflight clearance. Deputy Secretary of State Whitehead expressed disappointment, but added that he was over it. Comments such as these suggest American respect for France and an appreciation of future requirements for cooperation in other endeavors.

Nature of the Interaction

American-French military interaction regarding Operation El Dorado Canyon actually dated as far back as January 1986. On 23 January, an American military delegation headed by Lieutenant General Burpee, Joint Chiefs of Staff J-3, visited General Jean Saulnier,

Military Secretary for President Mitterand. The meeting took place at Elysee Palace.¹⁹

The American delegation made two proposals. First, would France consider participating in a two-pronged attack, from the Mediterranean in the north and out of Chad in the south, aimed at weakening Qadhafi's rule in Libya? Second, would France consider overflight clearances for F-111 bombers flying from England en route to a strike mission in Libya?²⁰

French General Saulnier rejected the first request. He explained that to do so would contradict France's preference for independent military action. But to the second request, General Saulnier indicated possibly yes. He specified, however, France would need a reasonable warning, of at least 24 hours.²¹ Several months later, 24 hours warning is about what the Americans gave the French.

Three points suggest the meeting itself was telling regarding the nature of American-French military cooperation. First, the meeting had taken place between extremely high ranking military officers, American and French. Second, the Americans divulged highly classified and sensitive war plans to the French. Third, the exchange was candid and frank. Overall, therefore, the meeting suggests that American officials viewed France in this instance as a trusted and respected ally.

Additional meetings took place, as well. After having visited London and Bonn, Ambassador Vernon Walters visited Paris on the evening of 13 April 1986 for the purpose of seeking French authority to overfly France as part of Operation El Dorado Canyon. The answer from both Prime Minister Chirac and President Mitterand was no.

Walters knew there was some level of disagreement among key French leaders over the issue of combating terrorism. For instance, Jacques Chirac, the powerful, conservative prime minister, was pressing for greater cooperation with the Western nations in the area of combating terrorism. Mitterand, on the left, opposed such cooperation. In fact, when countries, such as the United States, had attempted to raise the issue of terrorism at international economic conferences, Mitterand had directed that the French block such attempts.²² Walters' hope was that the conservative view might prevail.

American officials who might have been encouraged by Chirac, however, were soon to be sent some disappointing news. Following the publicized row between Mitterand and Chirac, Chirac's spokesman Edouard Balladur issued a public warning on 13 April 1986. Balladur said that despite France's internal disagreements, the United States should not construe Chirac's affinity for international cooperation against terrorism as a signal that France supported American desires to address the Libyan problem with military force.²³ In actuality, Walters had his answer prior to his meetings with Chirac and Mitterand.

Overall, the nature of the American-French interaction prior to the operation suggests a seasoned alliance. For instance, meetings on the operation took place at extremely high levels, specifically between the American Joint Chiefs of Staff J-3 and President Mitterand's military secretary. During that meeting, the Americans shared sensitive details of planned military operations. Had there been no sense of alliance with France, the meetings would not have taken place and the information would not have been shared.

Accomplishment of the Objective

Despite the lack of French cooperation, the Americans pressed ahead with Operation El Dorado Canyon. The success of the operation is debatable. The critics generally contend the operation did little more than force Qadhafi to adopt more subtle, and therefore, more effective methods of terrorism. They point to the Lockerbie airbus explosion of December 1988 and the resulting deaths of 270 people as evidence that the operation did not impede Qadhafi's sponsorship of deadly terrorism.

Supporters, on the other hand, insist that the operation succeeded inasmuch as Qadhafi lowered his profile, at least immediately after the operation. They also point out that the objective of the operation was not to end Libyan-sponsored terrorism, but to convince Qadhafi that while he might support terrorism, he could not hide from subsequent military reaction. In this latter regard, the operation was successful.²⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, French officials opted not to cooperate in American military operations against Libya because the operations were inconsistent with two important French national interests, to wit freedom of action and protection of France's sphere of influence in Africa. The proposed operations against Libya were, however, consistent with a third French national interest, the security of French citizens against terrorism. The French, however, viewed that interest as less important. Furthermore, President Mitterand saw the operation's targeting as unlikely to enhance the security of French citizens and property from terrorism.

Despite the lack of French cooperation in the operation, associated political rhetoric and military interaction demonstrated that America considered France an ally with which to be reckoned. Official American reaction generally expressed restrained disappointment. Also, the very fact that such a high-level military meeting took place at Elysee Palace in January 1986 in which the Americans shared sensitive military plans indicates a level of trust.

But the lack of French cooperation was not without cost. Flying time for U.S. Air Force pilots had been doubled. Pilot fatigue may have contributed both to the loss of one aircraft and crew and to several cases of target misidentification and inaccurate bombing. In the end, France's decision not to cooperate in the operation lowered American estimates of France's reliability as a military ally.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 4

OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM

On 2 August 1990, the Iraqi army seized Kuwait. The resulting implications for regional stability and the global economy provided another opportunity for American-French military cooperation. The military operation in which American and French forces participated in resolving the crisis was Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

Type of Military Operation

Operation Desert Shield/Storm was a combined, United Nations-sanctioned operation involving the armed forces of 28 nations. Associated United Nations Security Council Resolutions covering the operation included Resolutions 660 (2 August 1990), 661 (6 August 1990), 662 (9 August 1990), 664 (18 August 1990), 665 (25 August 1990), 666 (13 September 1990), 667 (16 September 1990), 669 (24 September 1990), 670 (25 September 1990), 674 (29 October 1990), 677 (28 November 1990), 678 (29 November 1990), and 686 (2 March 1991).

Desert Shield, 6 August 1990 through 16 January 1991, constituted the build-up phase of the operation. During this period, Coalition members deployed forces into the theater of operation and focused upon the defense of Saudi Arabia from a potential attack southward by Iraqi forces.

Desert Storm, 17 January through 28 February 1991, featured the Coalition's counterattack. As a result of the counterattack, Iraqi forces withdrew from Kuwait and returned to Iraq.

National Interests

The French had two national interests associated with the resolution of the crisis in the Gulf. First, like most nations of the industrialized world, France was concerned with maintaining her access to Gulf oil. Second, and more importantly as demonstrated by her determination to resolve the crisis unilaterally, France was interested in maintaining her freedom of action, especially in her response.

Access to Gulf Oil

Oil constitutes one of the primary ties between France and the Middle East today. France's relatively robust contribution to Operation Earnest Will indicates she recognized the critical nature of Gulf oil to France and was prepared to protect French access to that oil through the use of military force. Operation Earnest Will was conducted in 1987-1988 and featured primarily American naval forces which provided protection to merchant shipping in the Persian Gulf from Iraq's premier enemy at the time, Iran. Iranian anti-shipping missiles, minefields, and special operations attack boats threatened shipping which passed through the Gulf. During the operation to counter the Iranian threat, France's financial and naval force contributions ranked second only to those of the United States.¹

Officials of the French Ministry of Defense were not the only ones to respond to threatened access to Gulf oil. The French Minister of Industry Roger Faroux demonstrated his concern by quickly formulating

an energy-saving strategy designed to reduce French dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Faroux presented a plan wherein France would save 30 million tons (sic) of oil over 10 years. The savings would result from the use of electric powered vehicles, the substitution of renewable sources of energy for conventional sources, and the use of energy saving devices in home and office heating systems.² As Faroux and most Frenchmen were aware, Iraq's attack upon Kuwait could have devastating financial implications for France.

Freedom of Action

Although interest in maintaining access to Gulf oil was great, freedom of action was a greater concern to France throughout the Gulf crisis. French concern with freedom of action manifested itself in two ways. First, key French leaders throughout the crisis commented upon military command and control and the relationship between French and American military forces. Second, while Coalition forces prepared for war, France pursued a unilateral diplomatic effort to resolve the crisis. That effort persisted until Coalition air strikes initiated the counterattack.

French President Mitterand was assertive throughout the crisis in promoting France's role. In describing that role, Mitterand characterized his country as "one of the world's major powers," and further characterized France as having an imperative mission to fulfill in the region. An Algerian political analyst described Mitterand's actions throughout the crisis as those of a Frenchman who knew that France's standing among the Arab countries depended heavily upon how the crisis was finally resolved. The analyst added that France would gain

itself an important place in history should Paris be able to head off combat between Iraq and Coalition forces.³

Independent French action began on 6 August 1990, four days after Iraq's attack upon Kuwait, with the deployment of naval forces. While opposed to a NATO response to the crisis, France sent another frigate to the Gulf, bringing the total to three French warships deployed there. On 9 August 1990, President Mitterand announced that he would deploy ground forces to the Gulf region and military advisors to Saudi Arabia. He also announced, however, that the French would not subordinate French military forces to any foreign command in the region.

The potential command of French troops by American military leaders generated persistent interest in France. Throughout the crisis, journalists frequently raised the issue at press conferences with both President Mitterand and Defense Minister Chevenement. The editor of the French publication Liberation summarized French concern in his lamentation of the prospect of surrendering "24 years of strategic independence and tactical sovereignty" to America.⁴

An editorial appearing in the 25-26 August 1990 edition of the same French publication cited the argument of Frenchmen opposed to unilateral American action in the Gulf and in favor of a United Nations' effort. The article specified that the Gulf crisis had demonstrated a shift in the international balance of forces. The conclusion of the Cold War, according to the article, had diminished the potency of the former superpowers and simultaneously strengthened the United Nations' Security Council. As a result, America would be committing a "capital error" if it took any military action in the Gulf without the approval of the Security Council. The author concluded by insisting that while

America had the military power with which to police the world, it could not legitimately do so without first approaching the United Nations for approval.⁵

Despite the ostensibly unanimous French position regarding the perils of close cooperation with the Americans, two key French officials disagreed on the issue. The French newspapers of 21 August 1990 reported that the Defense Minister had criticized President Mitterand for adopting a tack unnecessarily close to that of the Americans in response to the crisis. On 22 August 1990, journalists queried the Defense Minister regarding his criticism. Chevenement dismissed the suggestion that he did not concur with official French policy. He also denied a reporter's suggestion that he intended to resign from office as a result of his disagreement with President Mitterand.⁶

Of greater significance than independent French military action was the unilateral French effort to resolve the crisis diplomatically. The French initiated this effort on 13 August 1990. French officials pointed out that one objective of the unilateral effort was to emphasize France's independence from the United States. Aides to President Mitterand and Foreign Minister Dumas further specified that while French actions to resolve the crisis might appear to coincide with American actions, France was not "in the wake" of President Bush.⁷

On 24 September 1990, President Mitterand announced a bold diplomatic program. He suggested that peaceful Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait could lead to a plebiscite in Kuwait, a settlement of the situation in Lebanon, the creation of an independent Palestinian state, and an arms limitation arrangement for several countries in the Middle East. The French diplomatic bid to resolve the crisis was an ambitious

one. The policy, however, contradicted American diplomatic policy which sought to isolate the issue of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait from other, longer-standing problems in the region, especially the Palestinian issue.⁸

In resisting the American solution, the French objected to what they viewed as American hypocrisy. Twenty-three years earlier, another Middle Eastern power had seized foreign territory, and the perceived American response had been one of oblique support. The Middle Eastern power in that case had been Israel, and the seized foreign territory included the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.⁹

The French continued their unilateral diplomatic efforts up until the Coalition's counterattack. As late as 14 January 1991, French President Mitterand advised officials of the United Nations Security Council that France's foreign minister was prepared to fly to Baghdad at a moment's notice in order to make another attempt at a negotiated settlement of the dispute. Three days later, the air campaign started and with it ended any further possibility of a negotiated settlement of the crisis.

Measures of Reliability

Three measures, namely political rhetoric, the nature of the interaction between the two forces, and the accomplishment of objectives, provide some estimate of France's reliability as an ally in the operation. The mild antagonism evident in both political rhetoric and force interaction suggests reduced reliability on the part of the French. Nonetheless, in his book It Doesn't Take a Hero, General

Swartzkopf, the commanding American officer in the operation, was generally positive in his comments regarding French forces.

Political Rhetoric

Political rhetoric throughout the crisis was generally antagonistic. It centered primarily upon the issue of command and control and the relationship between French and American forces deployed in the Gulf.

In a television interview on 6 September 1990, journalists confronted President Mitterand with a question concerning combined American-French military action. Mitterand responded first by expressing his pleasant surprise that the occurrence of the crisis had resurrected the institution of the Security Council in the United Nations. He followed up by noting that while French and American forces might act together, France would do so only in carrying out resolutions of the Security Council.¹⁰

In the same interview, another journalist posed a question concerning a hypothetical ultimatum issued by the United States and the Soviet Union for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. Mitterand said that such an ultimatum would be invalid, as only the Security Council could legitimately issue such an ultimatum.¹¹

On 9 September 1990, French statesman Jacques Chirac echoed Mitterand's criticism of potential unilateral American military action in the Gulf. Chirac claimed that no country could appoint itself as "gendarme of the world" as that title belonged legitimately only to the United Nations. Chirac's statement was in reference to a potential

unilateral American attack upon Iraqi forces in Kuwait. Rumors of such an attack had been circulating through the media at the time.¹²

During a press conference on 15 September 1990, journalists queried President Mitterand as to his willingness to cooperate with the United States in the Gulf. Mitterand asked the journalists why they were focused upon the United States and suggested they focus, instead, upon the United Nations. He added that although there might be some room for "solidarity" in the matter, he planned to remain the "master of the situation."¹³

In a television interview on 20 September 1990, the issue of command and control of French military forces in the Gulf arose, once again. This time, French Defense Minister Chevenement fielded the question. He assured reporters that command of French forces was presently exercised by France and would continue to be in the future. He added that if any coordination of French military operations in the region were necessary, the French would do so through the host nation, Saudi Arabia.¹⁴

Nature of the Interaction

The American response to Iraq's attack upon Kuwait led off with a request for European--to include French--logistical support for the task of deploying American combat troops to Saudi Arabia. In a meeting of the ambassadors of the 16 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries on 6 August 1990, American officials requested European merchant ships and aircraft for use in ferrying troops, weapons and supplies. Three NATO nations--Britain, Italy and Portugal--agreed to help. Two, however, were conspicuous in not volunteering to help.

These two, France and Spain, insisted that issues in the Gulf were not within NATO's purview.¹⁵

On 21 August 1990, the defense ministers and foreign ministers of nine West European countries, to include France, met to discuss plans for a combined naval task force in the Gulf. Representatives of the United States had already approached the United Nations' Security Council regarding authorization to use force in implementing a naval embargo against Iraq. By this time French naval forces, along with those of Britain and America, were already challenging Gulf traffic which was in potential violation of the embargo. French representatives specified, however, that they were not interested in joining any U.S.-led military coalition. Rather, they sought to coordinate a European military response to the crisis.¹⁶

Later, nonetheless, French ground units deployed to the Gulf as did the Americans. The initial French deployment was to Hafr Al-Batin.¹⁷ When the French forces arrived, they did not fall under the command of U.S. Central Command. Instead, they operated independently under French command and control, with close coordination with both Saudi forces and U.S. Central Command. By contrast, British military forces remained under British command but did fall under the operational control of U.S. Central Command.¹⁸

French proclamations indicating sensitivity to foreign command of her troops concerned American military leaders who rejected the concept of simultaneous unilateral military operations against the same enemy. In their view, such operations greatly increased the possibility of fratricide and confusion; worse, such disjointed operations increased

the chance of an Iraqi victory. The Americans pressed for a single, combined operation.¹⁹

Upon the transition to a forceful solution to the crisis, France cooperated in the military operation. However, the initial French military effort clearly reflected the ongoing internal debate among French leaders. For instance, following the initial aerial raid on Iraq, the French defense minister announced that France had taken part in the attack. He added, however, that the French were careful to bomb only military targets, and only targets within Kuwait--no targets in Iraq. But this statement contradicted President Mitterand's statement of one week earlier. Mitterand had noted that should force be necessary, France would participate fully and without any restrictions as France was a member of the United Nations Security Council and one of the world's major powers. In his first television appearance since the commencement of hostilities, President Mitterand attempted to set the record straight. Mitterand specified that France was prepared to participate in military operations to include those inside Iraq.²⁰ Shortly thereafter, Defense Minister Chevenement resigned.

Of note, contrary to Operation El Dorado Canyon, the French did authorize overflights by U.S. military aircraft during the operation. In February 1991, the French allowed B-52s to transit France from the United Kingdom en route to Iraq. B-52s staging from the United Kingdom and Spain primarily bombed ground targets throughout the war.²¹

Accomplishment of the Objective

Generally, the Allied Coalition achieved a remarkable victory in the Gulf. First, Iraqi forces unconditionally withdrew from Kuwait.

Second, the government of Kuwait in place prior to the Iraqi attack restored itself. Third, the Coalition restored stability to the region. President Bush cited these three objectives in a public address to the nation on 8 August 1990.²² Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the victory was its speed and precision.

The escape of both large portions of the Republican Guard and Saddam Hussein, however, represent two possible failures of the operation. General Schwartzkopf's premature announcement that he had accomplished all military objectives and American public concerns with unnecessary destruction resulted in termination of the conflict earlier than expected. In television interviews in late 1995, former President Bush advised that perhaps he had terminated operations too early, especially in view of the oppression which Saddam Hussein and escaped Iraqi combat units subsequently wrought upon dissident Iraqi Kurds.

Neither of these potential failures, however, is attributable to French action in the Gulf. The role of French military forces in the Gulf, like that of the majority of Coalition forces, was crucial in establishment of the multinational nature of the operation. From the strictly military perspective, the role of French military forces, as well as those of the other Coalition members, was less significant than that of American air and ground forces.

Conclusion

In conclusion, French action in the Gulf was driven primarily by her concern with freedom of action. When the prospect of an American-led military response initially arose, France rejected it and, instead, pursued both unilateral and European military responses.

Additionally, she pursued a unilateral diplomatic effort to resolve the crisis up until the shooting started. France's concern with oil was less compelling, especially as the size of the Coalition grew and the likelihood of a sustained Iraqi threat to access to Gulf oil diminished.

Three measures of reliability suggest France acted as an unreliable ally in the Gulf. First, the political rhetoric from such French figures as the president, prime minister, defense minister, and foreign minister were generally critical of the United States throughout the crisis. Second, the interaction between military forces began with French refusal to honor an American request for logistical support for deploying American combat troops. In the end, French troops cooperated in combined operations. In between, however, the issue of command and control arose repeatedly, with the French insisting that France would maintain control of her own troops. The French insisted that their cooperation was with the United Nations, and not with the United States. Third, while the Coalition generally achieved its objectives, unilateral and uncoordinated efforts by France could reasonably have derailed the Coalition. American military commanders expressed alarm at the prospect of simultaneous, unilateral military operations. While they did not occur, simultaneous, unilateral diplomatic operations did. The French proposal to link resolution of the Iraq-Kuwait problem to larger Middle Eastern problems potentially could have divided the Gulf Coalition, especially the Middle Eastern participants. A collapsed Coalition, in turn, might not have defeated the Iraqi threat.

In short, French determination to respond to the crisis unilaterally threatened the cohesion of the fragile Coalition so adroitly assembled by officials of the Bush Administration. In the end,

however, the Coalition survived, fought, and accomplished its military objectives.

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CHAPTER 5

OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT (PHASE I)

The aftermath of the Gulf War provided yet another opportunity for cooperation between American and French military forces. President Mitterand took the lead in pointing out Saddam Hussein's lethal repression of the Iraqi Kurds and Shiites who rose up against him after the war. In an effort to halt the killing, he brought the matter to the attention of the United Nations Security Council. Having just completed combined military operations in the region, American and French forces were well situated to respond.

The crisis which Operation Provide Comfort was designed to resolve involved three parties: Iraqi government forces, Iraqi Kurds, and Iraqi Shiites. Following the Allied Coalition's crushing defeat of Iraqi government forces, Iraqi Kurds and Shiites rebelled against Saddam Hussein's regime.

The first rebellion took place in the southern Shiite region of Iraq in the latter part of February 1991. Alienated Iraqi soldiers actually started the rebellion. Shiites, disaffected for other reasons, joined the rebellion against Saddam Hussein's government. The rebellion was spontaneous and therefore lacked formal planning and leadership. Iraqi government forces, led by the Republican Guard, crushed the rebellion in about one month.¹

The second rebellion closely followed the second and took place in northern Iraq. During this rebellion, Kurds participated in riots and violence usually targeting Iraqi government forces located in the region. Some of these government forces actually joined the rebellion, possibly out of fear of being crushed by it. Between 5 and 20 March 1991 the Kurds captured six towns in northern Iraq. The rebellion in the north gave the impression of being relatively better organized. Nonetheless, the rebels became overly ambitious, extended themselves too far, and met an overwhelming Iraqi government force.

The government's superior armament, including tanks, armored personnel carriers, and heavy artillery, proved to be a substantial advantage. Another advantage lay in the government's air power. While the Allied Coalition forbade Saddam Hussein's operation of fixed-wing aircraft, it made no such restriction against the use of rotary-wing aircraft for humanitarian purposes. Hussein took advantage of the rotary-wing exception and used his combat helicopter force to destroy the rebel force. Fleeing rebels sought refuge in Turkey, Syria, and Iran.²

Type of Military Operation

Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I) was a United Nations-sanctioned, combined military operation designed to counter the repression of the Kurds. Its initial deployment took place on 6 April 1991. In addition to the United States and France, eleven other countries provided military forces to the Allied Coalition. The French component of the coalition included 2,141 personnel from air force,

helicopter, airborne, engineer, signal, explosive ordnance disposal, medical, and logistic units.³

The primary resolution that the military operation sought to enforce was United Nations Resolution 688 which specifically cited assisting the Kurds. Additionally, the operation sought to enforce United Nations Resolution 678, authorizing the allies to bring peace and security to the region.

Phase I of Operation Provide Comfort concluded in September 1991 with the redeployment of most military forces. At this point, military operators handed over the majority of the mission to humanitarian organizations.⁴

National Interests

French national interests associated with Operation Provide Comfort included both the protection of the rights of minorities and, once again, freedom of action. With regard to the protection of minority rights, President Mitterand suggested that the plight of the Kurds in Iraq was no different from the plights of minorities throughout the world. Accordingly, he felt strongly about doing what he could to intervene on behalf of the Kurds. French concern for freedom of action was especially evident in France's vigorous efforts at the beginning of the crisis to bring the Kurds' situation to the attention of the United Nations.

Minority Rights

On 11 April 1991, President Mitterand addressed the French War College. The topic of his address was lessons learned from the recently concluded Gulf War. During the address, President Mitterand digressed

to discuss French humanitarian intervention on behalf of the Kurds. He justified French intervention by saying that the inability to defend the rights of minorities such as the Kurds in Iraq today would lead to similar failures in Europe tomorrow. He added that a demonstrated ability to defend minority rights would subsequently shape the general security of Europe in the future.⁵

Freedom of Action

The French demonstrated their interest in freedom of action throughout the operation in three ways. First, the French were instrumental in originally bringing the Kurds' problem to the attention of the United Nations. Second, when the United Nations balked at the concept of interfering in Iraq's domestic affairs, France demurred. Third, French President Mitterand, himself, maintained a high profile throughout the operation with his enthusiastic endorsement of French intervention.

On 1 April 1991, Bernard Kouchner, French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action, proclaimed his outrage over the ongoing atrocities being committed by Iraqi government forces against the Iraqi people. Kouchner said that he was angered by the seeming international indifference to the killings.

Likely recognizing strong French interest in resolving the problem, Masoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party, asked France, as well as the United States and Britain, to provide aid to the Kurds. Barzani provided details as to how his people had fled to the mountains in northern Iraq where they lacked both food and shelter. Barzani estimated the daily death toll at between 1,000 and 1,500.⁶

On the following day, spokesman Daniel Bernard of the French Foreign Ministry said that French officials were bringing to the attention of the United Nations Security Council Saddam Hussein's repression of his own people, especially the Kurds and the Shiites. Bernard said that the United Nations Security Council and Secretary General should then formulate a plan for halting the ongoing, inhumane repression of these two groups.⁷

On 3 April 1991, President Mitterand addressed the issue. During a weekly cabinet meeting, the President said that the United Nations Security Council must denounce Iraqi repression of its own people and maintain sanctions against Iraq until the repression ceased. President Mitterand suggested that if the United Nations failed to address the problem in Iraq, it would compromise its "political and moral authority."⁸

On 3 April 1991 the French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action departed France en route to Turkey with a plane load of medicine for distribution to the repressed people of Iraq. Once in Turkey, the Secretary's intention was to proceed into Iraq where he could distribute the aid. Press coverage suggested the purpose of the Secretary's trip was to demonstrate that France was prepared to act unilaterally, if necessary, to effect badly needed humanitarian intervention.⁹

On 5 April 1991, the United Nations Security Council issued Resolution 688. The resolution condemned the ongoing repression of the Iraqi Kurds. Of significance, the resolution cited French, among other, reporting of the repression to the United Nations. The French were continuing to establish themselves as a leading force in the resolution of the problem.

On 8 April 1991, President Mitterand addressed a European summit in Luxembourg. He advised that he was in favor of the establishment of a protection zone in northern Iraq for the Kurds. Mitterand added that he believed the United Nations should administer the zone.¹⁰ France's leading politician was front and center in shaping the United Nations' response to the crisis.

On 9 April 1991, in response to objections to "interference" in the internal affairs of Iraq, the French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas proclaimed a "duty to interfere." He said that if international law forbids interventions such as that proposed for Iraq, then international law ought to be changed. He claimed that the case of Iraq constituted a particularly serious violation of human and minority rights that could not simply be ignored.¹¹

Measures of Reliability

Political rhetoric, interaction between American and French forces, and the accomplishment of objectives collectively attest to France's reliability as an American military ally throughout Operation Provide Comfort.

Political Rhetoric

On 8 April 1991, Claude Cheysson, former French foreign minister, paid United States foreign policy an unexpected compliment. Cheysson's feeling was that criticism of America's failure to remove Iraq's government during Operation Desert Storm was unjustified. In Cheysson's view, to have done so would have been shortsighted and would have created a power vacuum. The vacuum, in turn, would have generated further instability in the region. Said Cheysson, "Those who say the

United States should have done more [were] completely irresponsible."

He continued, "It's a good thing there is still a government in Baghdad, or else there would be anarchy in Iraq which could in turn upset the stability of all its neighbors."¹²

On 16 April 1991, President Mitterand's spokesman, Hubert Vedrine, announced that France and the United States had agreed upon an "initiative to meet the urgent needs of the Kurdish refugees." Vedrine specified that the two leaders had made their agreement during a telephone conference. He added that the agreement was part of an overall effort including European Community countries and the United Nations. Vedrine concluded by noting that American, British, and French aircraft had already dropped 1,029 tons of relief supplies to the displaced Iraqis.¹³

On the same day, President Bush announced plans for an expanded relief effort for the Kurds. In his announcement, President Bush specified that a combined military effort involving American, French, British, and Turkish military elements was already underway. He noted, however, that the operation was not providing adequate relief, therefore leading him to consult President Mitterand, Prime Minister Major, Chancellor Kohl, President Ozal, and Secretary General de Perez de Cuellar regarding increased aid. President Bush specified that ongoing and future U.S. miliary operations were consistent with UN Security Council Resolution 688 and were carried out in conjunction with the United Nations, international relief organizations, and the European allies. He concluded that he intended to turn over the administration and security of the safe zones to the United Nations as quickly as practical.¹⁴

Political rhetoric, both American and French, was in this case positive. The antagonism consistently evident during Operation Desert Shield/Storm was absent. The United States, France, and the other eleven military members of the Coalition presented a united front in their collective response to the crisis.

Nature of the Interaction

Operation Provide Comfort originated as a joint task force when American troops deployed to the area of operations beginning on 6 April 1991. However, other nations of the world indicated a desire to participate in the operation, and subsequently deployed troops starting on 12 April 1991. With the influx of multinational troops, the nature of the task force changed from joint to combined. So, too, did the staff. What had once been a strictly American staff evolved into a multinational staff, including French participation.¹⁵

During Operation Desert Storm the issue of chain of command worried American commanders who feared simultaneous, unilateral operations. Accordingly, General Shalikashvili addressed the issue up front. The General made clear to the commander of each Coalition force that he would exercise overall tactical control. He established no written agreements with the commanders. They, nonetheless, agreed. Moreover, they expressed enthusiasm to get on with the task. Only the commander of the German contingent expressed reservations based upon restrictions placed upon him by Germany's Constitution.¹⁶

The specific manner in which American and French forces cooperated suggested a high degree of reliability on the part of the French. For instance, the commander of the combined task force

established multinational sectors throughout the area of operations. In the sector commanded by a French brigade commander, French, Belgian, Spanish, and American military forces operated. French military forces in the sector handled security and relief assistance. Spanish and Belgian forces provided medical services to displaced Kurds. American civil affairs units within the sector handled the resettlement of Kurds. Additionally, an American military police unit fulfilled law enforcement and convoy control requirements. In short, American and French units, plus Belgian and Spanish, worked effectively in this particular sector under French command and accomplished the mission.¹⁷

Accomplishment of the Objective

In a letter to the Director for Operational Plans and Interoperability, J7, Joint Staff, Admiral Frost, U.S. European Command's Director of Operation, summarized the extent to which the operation achieved its objectives. According to the Admiral, "by all measures, Operation Provide Comfort was a complete success."¹⁸

U.S. European Command's After Action Report on the operation was equally complimentary. With regard to Joint/Combined Interoperability, the report specified:

The U.S. Services and the coalition forces worked well together. In the broadest sense, cooperation and interoperability were not problems; however, at the technical and procedural level, there were many areas requiring standardization.¹⁹

Conclusion

In contrast to American-French cooperation in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, the degree of cooperation in Operation Provide Comfort was consistently high. The operation accommodated French interests.

Furthermore, all measures of French reliability as an ally were positive.

Political rhetoric, primarily that of President Bush and President Mitterand, suggested a pragmatic understanding of the requirement for mature cooperation. Both presidents cited consultations with the other suggesting the operation on which they agreed to embark was a truly combined one. A former French foreign secretary went so far as to praise American foreign policy in the Gulf.

Likewise, the interaction between American and French forces suggested pragmatism and unity of effort. For instance, when French military forces required augmentation, American forces, among others, provided it. General Shalikashvili resolved the issue of command and control, so sensitive during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, through simple verbal understandings with the commanders of all coalition military members.

Not surprisingly, Phase I of Operation Provide Comfort was a success. The operation demonstrated not only France's reliability, but in the broader sense, the efficacy of combined military coalitions in providing humanitarian assistance. Accordingly, it suggested the likelihood of American-French cooperation in such operations in the future.

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CHAPTER 6

OPERATION TURQUOISE/OPERATION SUPPORT HOPE

Political chaos and mass killings in 1994 in Rwanda, in central east Africa, provided yet another opportunity for American-French military cooperation. Animosity between the two major Rwandan tribes, the Hutu and the Tutsi, resulted in carnage and atrocities which the Western world could not ignore for long. When political solutions failed, the French announced their "obligation" to restore peace yet lacked strategic airlift with which to carry out the entire operation unilaterally. Accordingly, the French looked to America for strategic airlift.

With regard to the background of the conflict in Rwanda, the Hutu Tribe and the Tutsi Tribe have dominated the country over the past two centuries. The Hutu have traditionally outnumbered the Tutsi by a considerable margin. At the conclusion of the 18th century the Tutsi, nonetheless, ruled the country. In 1890, the Rwandans peacefully accepted German rule as Rwanda became a component of German East Africa. Following World War II, Rwanda became part of the Belgian mandate of Ruanda-Urundi. Intertribal fighting arose in 1957 as the Humus assumed greater political influence within the country. The Humus prevailed, and a large wave of Tutsi fled the country. In 1962, Rwanda gained her independence, and Gregoire Kayibanda assumed the presidency. Major General Juvenal Habyarimana seized power in a coup in 1973 and

established a military dictatorship. By 1978, civilian rule was reinstalled. However, only one political party existed and Habyarimana retained the office of president. In 1990, Tutsi exiles invaded Rwanda and fighting continued until 1993.

The precipitating killing in Rwanda started in early 1994 with the death of President Habyarimana on 6 April. He died when the aircraft in which he was flying crashed under suspicious circumstances. The Humus accused the Tutsi of having shot down the aircraft. The viciousness and scale of the ensuing intertribal violence grabbed international attention. By early April 1994, France, Belgium and the United States had sent military transport aircraft into Kigali to evacuate approximately 2,850 Western personnel.¹

French involvement in Rwanda prior to the death of President Habyarimana included substantial military assistance to the ruling Humus. This military assistance was to prove troublesome for the French after they announced plans to intervene militarily. The Tutsi reacted by charging the French with being politically partial. The Tutsi were not the only ones who objected. American editorials accused the French of "meddling" in Rwanda's internal affairs and dismissed French efforts to resolve Rwanda's problems as self-serving.

Type of Military Operation

The relief effort in Rwanda began as a unilateral French military operation, Operation Turquoise, sanctioned by the United Nations. The operation lasted approximately from 22 June through 22 August 1994. The parallel American effort was Operation Support Hope which was of similar duration. While basically simultaneous, unilateral

operations, the Americans did directly assist the French in the provision of strategic airlift of French troops and equipment. Additionally, both forces upgraded two airports key to the receipt of needed supplies and materiel.

National Interests

French national interests associated with the relief effort in Rwanda included both freedom of action and Africa, itself. The interest in freedom of action was evident in the initiative with which France responded to the crisis, especially given the international pressure to keep France out of Rwanda, at least initially. Later, France's curt refusal to extend her deployment in Rwanda in response to American calls to do so also demonstrated France's interest in freedom of action. France's strong interest in African affairs stems from her former colonial empire on the continent. France remains the primary Western influence in most of French-speaking Africa.

Freedom of Action

On 16 June 1994, officials of the French Foreign Ministry attempted to persuade European and African nations to join her in a military intervention effort should United Nations troops be unable to respond to the crisis in Rwanda in a timely manner. The Foreign Minister Alain Juppe assured potential military allies that the intervention would be a short-term one.²

On 20 June 1994, France's foreign minister announced that France's primary European allies supported her proposal for a military intervention in Rwanda. He further specified that France's plan met with the complete approval of the African nations, as well. With the

announced support of European and African allies, France then sought the approval of the United Nations to proceed with plans to deploy military forces to stop the ongoing massacre in Rwanda. The United Nations agreed, citing 22 August 1994 as the required termination date for the French deployment.³

Opposition to French assertiveness in resolving Rwanda's civil strife began to develop by late June 1994. For instance, representatives of Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi denied France authorization to launch operations from their respective territories. Representatives of Zimbabwe claimed that those African nations that had promised to provide troops for a United Nations military effort might reconsider in view of plans for a French-led military intervention.⁴

Despite the resistance, France proceeded with her plan, Operation Turquoise, to intervene militarily. By 25 June 1994, French paratroopers were in Rwanda and had begun to disarm Rwandan militias. The paratroopers broke up roadblocks and disarmed those attending them. A French spokesman asserted that French forces were intervening impartially, favoring neither the Hums nor the Tutsi in the conflict. The paratroopers were the initial troops of a total of 2,500 which France planned eventually to deploy to Rwanda.⁵

As the French continued both their military intervention and their effort to attract allies in the venture, international spectators began to assess France's motives in leading the military effort.

Marlise Simons of The New York Times opined on 3 July 1994 that France's motives were twofold: to fulfill its self-ascribed role as world power and to cause others to view France as a world power. Mr. Simons' view of French intervention in Rwanda as somewhat self-serving contradicted

the view cultivated by French officials, namely that intervention was altruistic. On the following day, Sam Kiley of U.S. News and World Report likewise suggested that France's motives in the effort were not entirely altruistic. An editorial in Newsweek appearing on the same day was less diplomatic: France was engaging in self-interested meddling, according to the authors of the editorial.

The criticism dissipated, however, as the French began to make a difference on the ground. Public opinion then seemed to view the operation more favorably, inasmuch as the French, if no one else, had at least intervened in an effort to stop the killing. But as the United Nations had specified earlier, France's military intervention was not to extend beyond 22 August 1994. The problem lay in the fact that United Nations follow-on forces were not prepared to assume their mission.

Opposition to French withdrawal began to mount. Many Rwandans desired the French to stay. So, too, did American officials. President Clinton himself urged the French to leave their forces in Rwanda. But immediately after the American appeal, the French indicated that they would not stay. The Clinton Administration, in turn, began encouraging public expressions of international support for an extension of the French military presence in Rwanda.

Despite the mounting pressure, the French refused to extend in place. Richard Duque, speaking for the French Foreign Ministry, said, "We are going to withdraw our troops on the date envisioned. We have assumed our responsibility. We were the only ones to do something."⁶ True to his word, French forces departed as scheduled.

In February 1995, the ranking French officer in the operation, Admiral Jacques Lanxade, provided a review of Operation Turquoise. In

the article, he specified that the operation had involved 3,000 soldiers (to include a total of 500 soldiers from Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Mauritania, Egypt, Niger, and the Congo), 700 vehicles, and about 8,100 tons of supplies. He mentioned that aircraft from the Air France fleet could not be used in the transport of these personnel or equipment due to inadequacies of the airfields in Rwanda, and that Soviet military airlift had been used, instead. He summarized the operation as a grand French-led success, aided by France's African allies. Although he cited the use of Soviet aircraft in deploying to Rwanda, he made no mention of the use of American aircraft in the redeployment of French forces.⁷

Africa

The French interest in Africa is a fundamental one. France's primary, if not exclusive, influence throughout French-speaking Africa is that which qualifies France as a regional power. During the Cold War, France's influence over so many developing countries allowed her to claim to be a third alternative to NATO, led by the United States, and to the Warsaw Pact, led by the Soviet Union. Even after the Cold War, French-speaking Africa remains an expression of French status.⁸

The French interest in Africa extends beyond that of political status. More tangibly, Africa is also a source of raw materials for France. For instance Niger and Gabon export uranium to France, while Zambia and Zaire export copper. French phosphates come primarily from Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Togo and Algeria. Both Liberia and Mauritania provide France with iron ore.⁹

The gravity of the French interest in Africa is reflected by the frequency of French military intervention on the continent. Since the

age of independence among the former French colonies in the early 1960s, France has employed her military forces on many occasions, primarily to conduct varying forms of counterinsurgency. The French conducted such military operations in Cameroon from 1959 through 1964, in Mauritania in 1961, in Senegal both from 1959 through 1960 and in 1962, in the Congo in both 1960 and 1962, in Gabon in 1960 and from 1962 through 1964, in Zaire from 1977 through 1978, and, finally, in Chad on three occasions: from 1960 through 1963, from 1968 through 1975, and from 1983 through 1984.¹⁰ French deployment of troops to Rwanda in 1994, therefore, was fully consistent with French military policy in Africa.

Measures of Reliability

The three measures of reliability, namely political rhetoric, interaction between the forces, and accomplishment of objectives, generally suggest French reliability in the relief effort. However, political rhetoric moved from positive at the beginning of the effort to manipulative toward the end. The actual interaction between forces went smoothly. The accomplishment of objectives was slightly marred by French insistence upon departing Rwanda as originally planned, as opposed to delaying redeployment until the United Nations force was prepared to assume the role played by the French.

Political Rhetoric

During a press conference in Paris on June 7, 1994, President Clinton and President Mitterand answered questions regarding the crisis in Rwanda. President Clinton remarked that America was in a position to help resolve the crisis and, in his opinion, should do so. He specified that he envisioned responding with personnel, armored equipment and

transportation. Clinton said that he thought the correct response to the problem should settle upon African resolution of the crisis with the assistance of countries such as France and the United States.

Later that evening, President Clinton attended a dinner party hosted by President Mitterand in Paris. Although he did not address Rwanda specifically, he did address future American-French cooperation, in general. President Clinton told the dinner guests the Americans wish to be "partners with you in the common struggles of the 21st Century. The fact that we sometimes [have] a difficult partnership makes it all the more interesting . . ." Jokingly, he added, "Sometimes with the French and the Americans we no longer need enemies." Later still, President Clinton stated, "I can honestly say with every passing day, I come to appreciate France more."¹¹ The President's comments pragmatically recognized the sometimes awkward and stormy nature of relations with France, but nonetheless expressed hope for continued cooperation in the future.

Later at a press conference in Washington, the Secretary of Defense commented on specific American-French military cooperation in resolving the crisis in Rwanda. On 22 July 1994, he cited two specific military efforts jointly undertaken with the French. First, he described combined efforts to augment the aircraft-handling capacity of two critical airfields, Goma and Bukavu. Second, he told reporters that the Defense Department had dispatched a liaison team to Paris for the purpose of coordinating relief efforts.

Nature of the Interaction

The French were already deploying to Rwanda while simultaneously searching for partners, to include the Americans, in resolving the Rwandan crisis.¹² The useful asset which the Americans could provide France was strategic military airlift, an element lacking in the French Air Force.

French strategic military airlift at the time of the Rwandan crisis was extremely limited in comparison to comparable American capacity. The French military unit responsible for airlift, Air Transport Command, consisted of twenty squadrons: one heavy lift, five tactical lift, and fourteen light transport.

Within the heavy lift squadron were two types of aircraft, the DC-8 and the A310-300. The French DC-8s were civilian passenger aircraft modified into cargo transporters. The French military began operating these converted aircraft in 1983. The modification of the aircraft involved the replacement of passenger seating with a seven track cargo floor, as well as the installation of a larger cargo door. The dimensions of the new door were 85"x140". Although larger, the door still narrowly limited the size of the cargo which could be carried. At the time of the Rwandan crisis, the Air Transport Command had but four DC-8s in its inventory.

The second strategic airlifter in the inventory of the Air Transport Command was the A310-300. Like the DC-8, this aircraft was not originally designed for military use, rather for commercial passenger and cargo transport. French forces nonetheless used the aircraft for military purposes, as did the Germans and the Canadians. The aircraft's maximum passenger capacity is 280. Its total cargo

volume is 3,606 cubic feet. Further limiting cargo transportation are the three cargo doors, the largest of which measures 67.5"x106". Clearly, then, this aircraft cannot transport wheeled or tracked military vehicles. Nor can it handle the volume of cargo that the American C-141/Starlifter, the C-5/Galaxy or the C-17/Globemaster III can handle. At the time of the crisis in Rwanda, the French had four A310-300s in the inventory of the Air Transport Command. Turning to the Americans for assistance, therefore, was a logical step.

The lack of strategic airlift has caused French military officials to approach the Americans with regard to crises in other locations in Africa, as well. For instance, at the beginning of the recent civil strife in Algeria where the French were routinely targeted, the French quickly recognized the potential need for rapid, military airlift with which to transport French citizens in Algeria back to France. French liaison officers at Headquarters, United States European Command made inquiries regarding the feasibility of American assistance should the need arise.

French military officials were well aware that American strategic lift assets routinely transited Africa. For instance, throughout the crisis in Rwanda, United States Air Force C-141/Starlifters visited Senegal, Chad, and Zaire on a monthly basis for business unrelated to Rwanda. At N'Djamena Airport in Chad, the strategic-lift C-141s shared the same airfield as the theater-lift French C-160s.

American strategic airlift was especially important to the French during their redeployment from Rwanda. Between 22 and 31 August 94 seven transport missions redeployed French forces. Two C-

141/Starlifters and four C-5/Galaxy aircraft flights returned French troops and equipment to France. Another C-5/Galaxy returned troops and equipment to the Island of Reunion in the Pacific.¹³

Accomplishment of the Objectives

Generally, both the Americans and the French achieved their objectives in the Rwandan relief effort. The objectives of the American effort, Operation Support Hope, were to stop the dying, return refugees to Rwanda, stabilize the refugee situation, and turn over the operation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.¹⁴ French objectives under Operation Turquoise were similar. They were to stop the massacre, assure the protection of people within the French safe zone, and pass on the operation to humanitarian organizations.¹⁵

The accomplishment of the American objective of returning Rwandan refugees to Rwanda was, however, somewhat marred by the French refusal to leave troops in place beyond 22 August 1994. When they withdrew, refugees took advantage. Rwandans, previously deterred by the French Legionnaires, charged through Ethiopian troops en route to Zaire. At least 45,000 got through.

Overall, however, both American and French forces called their operations a success. The Americans felt that Operation Support Hope had stemmed the killing and returned large numbers of Rwandans to Rwanda. The French, on the other hand, claimed Operation Turquoise put an end to the massacre, protected lives within the humanitarian zone, and therefore allowed for a smooth turnover to relief organizations.¹⁶ operation

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Rwandan relief effort, consisting of French Operation Turquoise and the American Operation Support Hope, was basically a French-led effort. While the United States responded initially to the crisis with evacuation support and money, the French responded with military intervention, of much greater significance in ending the large-scale killing.

French interests in responding to the crisis were two: freedom of action and protection of the French sphere of influence in Africa. She showed her insistence upon her freedom of action in defying critics at the outset of the operation and undertaking an unpopular military intervention. She demonstrated her sensitivity to freedom of action a second time when the Americans, whose press had been so critical of French intervention in the first place, insisted that France extend her deployment beyond the United Nations-specified 22 August 1994. To have done so would have impinged upon French freedom of action and the French, therefore, refused.

The French generally showed themselves to be reliable allies in the effort. Political rhetoric was generally positive, if not one-sided. Public comments by both President Clinton and Defense Secretary Perry painted France as a reliable military partner. Later, however, public comments by Clinton Administration officials exhorting the French to extend their stay in Rwanda came across as manipulative. Interaction between forces was limited as the two operations were basically parallel. However, American and French forces did reinforce two major airfields together, and the U.S. Air Force redeployed the majority of French forces at the conclusion of Operation Turquoise. Both forces

were able to accomplish their similar objectives, despite the withdrawal of French Forces that allowed some Rwandans to flee to neighboring Zaire, contrary to American desires.

Endnotes

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⁸John Chipman, French Military Policy and African Security, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1985), 1-2.

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CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding study has yielded both discoveries and areas for further study. The discoveries address the conditions for France's military cooperation with the United States. They also address the applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory to French decision making regarding such military cooperation. The areas for further study relate directly to France's reliability as a military ally, and focus upon more recent politico-military developments in France.

Before addressing discoveries and areas for further study, however, a summary of the thesis is in order. The table on the following page recapitulates the four case studies covered in the thesis. It describes the type of military operation involved, French national interests at stake, and the elements of reliability, to include political rhetoric, interaction between the forces, and accomplishment of the objective.

The figure which follows the table then demonstrates the impact of those four military events, as well as the impact of military events dating from the American Revolution, upon American-French relations over time. Collectively, these military events will influence the likelihood of French military cooperation in the future.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF FOUR CASE STUDIES

	Operation El Dorado Canyon	Operation Desert Shield/Storm	Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I)	Operation Turquoise & Operation Support Hope
<u>Type of Operation</u>	1. Proposed combined operation-- rejected 2. Proposed unilateral operation with passive French cooperation-- rejected	U.N. sponsored, multinational operation, U.S. led	U.N. sponsored, multinational humanitarian operation, French led diplomatically, U.S. led militarily	U.N. sponsored, multinational humanitarian operations, French led
<u>French National Interests</u>	1. Freedom of Action 2. Protection of French sphere of influence in Africa 3. Security from Terrorism	1. Freedom of Action 2. Access to Gulf Oil	1. Minority Rights 2. Freedom of Action	1. Freedom of Action 2. Protection of French sphere of influence in Africa
<u>Political Rhetoric</u>	Antagonistic: 1. France condemns operation 2. U.S. expresses disappointment with France	Antagonistic: France consistently insists upon U.N. versus U.S. leadership and rejects U.S. command and control	Mutually supportive: officials of both countries express desire to cooperate	Mixed: both countries initially express hope of jointly resolving the crisis. U.S. officials then attempt to pressure the French to extend their stay in Rwanda
<u>Interaction between Forces</u>	High level military meeting suggests seasoned alliance	Limited. The operation was primarily an American one. French participation was marred by internal disagreement over extent of participation.	Extensive. Area under French command included U.S. support troops. French agree to TACON.	Considerable. U.S. Air Force provides strategic airlift in the form of C-141/Starlifter sorties to France and Reunion.
<u>Accomplishment of Objectives</u>	Mixed. Inability to overfly France likely contributed to loss of aircraft and crew and mixed bombing success.	Solid. Despite the risk posed by French unilateral diplomatic efforts, the Coalition holds, fights, and soundly defeats Iraqi forces.	"Complete success." Objectives achieved in an atmosphere of mutual support and cooperation.	Mixed. Objectives generally achieved despite French pullout against wishes of the U.S.

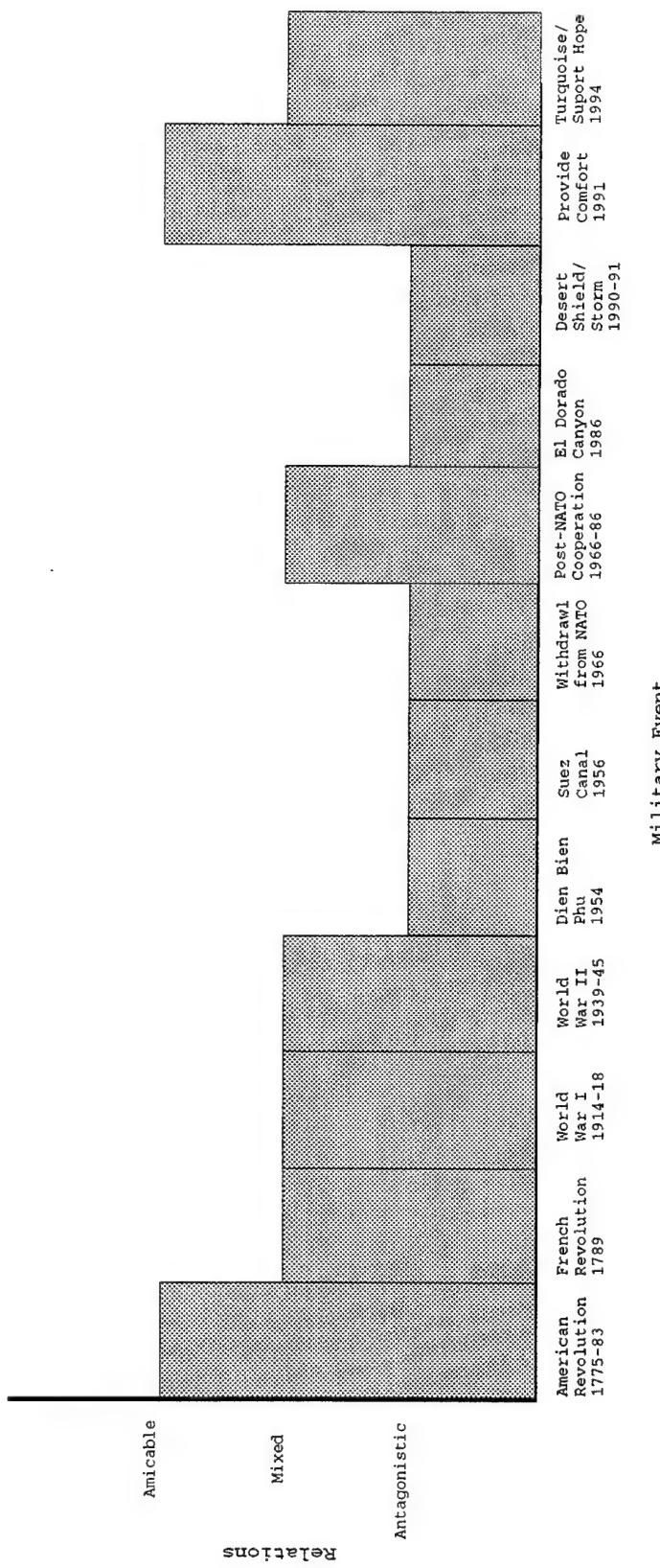


Figure 2. Impact of Military Events on Relations, 1775-1994

Discoveries

Conditions of Cooperation

France is likely to cooperate as an American military ally under three conditions. First, both France and the United States must generally concur with the objectives of the military operation at hand. Second, both nations must agree upon the means of accomplishing the objectives. Finally, France must either sponsor the operation herself, or be able to point to a neutral, supranational sponsor such as the United Nations in order to justify participation.

Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, and Operations Turquoise and Support Hope in Rwanda all met the first condition for cooperation, namely mutual agreement upon military objectives. In Operation Desert Storm, the Americans and the French resolved to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait and to restore access to Gulf oil. In Operation Provide Comfort, the Americans and the French pursued the common objective of providing relief to the Kurds in northern Iraq. Finally, in relief operations in Rwanda, both nations had as their common objectives termination of the ongoing massacre, protection of the people, and turnover of the operation to humanitarian organizations. Each of these operations therefore met the first condition for French military cooperation.

The same three operations also generally met the second condition, agreement upon the means by which to achieve the military objectives. In Operation Desert Storm, however, the French originally did not agree with the American approach to achieving the objectives. The French rejected the United States' decision to resolve the dispute

by force. Accordingly, the French attempted a unilateral, diplomatic settlement. When the Iraqis took hostages from the French embassy in Kuwait and French efforts to resolve the crisis diplomatically failed, however, the French agreed with the American-proposed means of achieving the objectives by force. Finally, in Rwanda, both nations generally agreed that the means of achieving the military objective was to establish a presence and distribute food, water and medicine to the people. In the end, these three operations met the second condition for French military cooperation.

Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, and Operations Turquoise and Support Hope also met the third condition for French cooperation. This particular condition specifies that France must either sponsor the operation herself or be able to demonstrate that the sponsor is a supranational entity such as the United Nations. The United Nations sponsored Operation Desert Shield/Storm through a series of Security Council resolutions. Despite the fact that some perceived disproportionate American contributions to the operation as evidence that it was an "American" operation, the French chose to view it as a United Nations operation. Likewise, in Operation Provide Comfort, the United Nations issued an authorizing resolution. Finally, the French themselves unilaterally sponsored relief operations in Rwanda, while simultaneously prodding the United Nations to take action. The United Nations sanctioned military intervention as a means of restoring order in Rwanda. The three operations, therefore, generally met the third condition for French cooperation.

Conditions of Non cooperation

Just as conditions exist under which France is likely to cooperate as a military ally, a closely related set of conditions generally compels France not to cooperate. These conditions are four: a lack of consensus regarding the operation's objectives, failure to agree upon the means by which to accomplish the objectives, unilateral American or non-supranational sponsorship of the operation, and perceived violation of French freedom of action.

Operation El Dorado Canyon in April 1986 serves as a good example in which the French opted not to cooperate as an American military ally. In fact, this operation met all four conditions of French non cooperation.

The operation met the first condition for non cooperation in that France and the United States did not fully agree upon the objectives of the proposed military operation. With regard to punishing the Libyans, the French were torn. Terrorism had been on the rise in France in the period leading up to El Dorado Canyon. However, the terrorists who were striking French targets were not primarily Libyan or Libyan-sponsored. Besides, the proposed operation involved striking limited military targets and contradicted broader French objectives in Libya where the leadership had persistently created problems for France's former colony to the south, Chad. President Mitterand expressed interest in a larger scale operation with the objective of removing Qadhafi from power. Since France and the United States could not agree upon the objectives of the operation, France opted not to cooperate.

Operation El Dorado Canyon also met the second condition of non cooperation, namely disagreement over the means of accomplishing the military objectives. The means proposed by the Americans for the punishment of Libya were to strike limited military targets in Tripoli and Benghazi. President Mitterand objected. He disapproved of the American method and suggested a larger pool of targets. The French and the Americans failed to arrive at a compromise, hence no military cooperation.

The operation also met the third condition of non cooperation which has to do with sponsorship. While the French recognize the American capability to act unilaterally, they do not recognize her authority to do so. From the French perspective, that which legitimizes American military operations is sanction by the United Nations. The United Nations did not sanction Operation El Dorado Canyon. While the British provided passive cooperation in the matter, the operation was, for the most part, unilaterally American. Hence, the French declined to cooperate.

Finally, Operation El Dorado Canyon met the fourth condition of non cooperation, namely perceived violation of French freedom of action. The French preoccupation with freedom of action has its roots in World War II. As early as 1940, after the Germans had defeated the French Army within six weeks and de Gaulle found himself struggling for a seat at the Allied table, he resolved to resist all future attempts by any nation to impinge upon France's capacity to act independently. This applied to the Germans during the war, but also to the British and the Americans whom de Gaulle perceived as manipulators of the weakened French. During the Cold War that followed, America advocated a combined

defense in the form of NATO against the Warsaw Pact. France rejected the combined approach as she feared being dragged into conflicts of which she wanted no part. She perceived such an arrangement as a violation of her freedom of action. Accordingly, France withdrew from the military committee of NATO.

In Operation El Dorado Canyon, the follow-up request for authority to overfly France came little over 24 hours before the operation. To have acquiesced might have suggested French malleability, and was therefore unacceptable. Also, France's cooperation in a military operation whose objectives she did not agree with for the purpose of presenting a united front against terrorism would have meant compromising French freedom of action--again, unacceptable. Finally, to have agreed to cooperate in a military operation in which French-recommended means, namely a broad spectrum of targets as opposed to limited military targets, were rejected would have violated French freedom of action, as well. In short, Operation El Dorado Canyon was completely unacceptable from the standpoint of respect for France's freedom of action. Accordingly, the French opted not to cooperate in the American military operation.

In summary, the French are not likely to cooperate as an American military ally when they disagree with the United States over objectives and means, when the sponsor is not France or a supranational organization, and, most importantly, when they perceive disregard for French freedom of action. Operation El Dorado Canyon met all four conditions for non cooperation.

Application of the Conditions of Cooperation to Bosnia

American and French military participation in the ongoing implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, signed on 14 December 1995 in Paris, provides an opportunity to test the applicability of the conditions for cooperation/non cooperation. Should the proposed conditions for military cooperation be valid, France must agree with the objectives of the military operation and the means of achieving them, and be able to point to a supranational sponsor of the operation. Furthermore, the absence of non cooperation on the part of the French military would indicate France's perception of adequate respect for her freedom of action.

France has demonstrated her agreement with the objectives of Operation Joint Endeavor and the means of achieving them primarily through her vigorous participation in the operation to date. She is among the five leading nations, the other four being the United States, Britain, Germany and Italy, driving the operation. Of the 60,000 personnel which constitute the implementation force, or I-FOR, 10,000 of them are French.¹ Additionally, within close proximity to French headquarters in Mostar are the important cities of Llidza, Sarajevo and Gorazde. Moreover, the French are playing a major role in one of the operation's primary objectives, namely the monitoring of zones of separation among the Serb, Bosnian, and Croat forces. In this effort, surveillance aircraft operating out of Istres, France are monitoring the Bosnian terrain.² The French Air Force Dassault Mirage F1-CR, for instance, collects electronic intelligence associated with Serbian ground to air missile systems.³ Meanwhile, the French Navy is involved, as well. For instance, included in the NATO/Western European task force

at sea is the French carrier Foch. The Foch and the USS Saratoga are protected by a variety of multinational destroyers and cruisers.⁴

Not surprisingly, France has sought to put her unique mark on the operation. In fact, some French officials have questioned the naming of the Dayton Peace Accords. They contend that the accords are little more than a repeat of the Kinkel-Jeppe plan produced two years earlier by the defense ministers of Germany and France, respectively. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette publicly referred to the treaty as the "Elysee Treaty." Later, government spokesmen referred to it as the "Paris Accords on Bosnia."⁵

Despite petty disagreements over the name of the treaty which she is jointly implementing, France ostensibly perceives adequate respect for her freedom of action. Such perception may in part stem from the policy of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Joulwan who has indicated that each sector will include multinational forces and no individual nation will operate any particular sector.⁶ From the French perspective, such policy likely limits the potential for American hegemony. In turn, the potential for threats from the United States to France's freedom of action is reduced.

The sponsor of I-FOR is NATO which took over for the United Nations' whose force in country was the United Nations Protection Force. This meets France's third requirement for military cooperation, namely that the sponsor be a supranational entity or France.

All of the conditions for military cooperation on the part of France seem to apply in the case of the implementation of the Bosnian Peace Accords. This congruence, therefore, suggests the conditions for French military cooperation specified in this thesis are valid.

Applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory

The Balance of Threat Theory is especially applicable to the study of France's military cooperation or non cooperation with the United States. Exaggerated concerns for freedom of action suggest a self perceived weakness on the part of France. Ostensibly, modern France still battles to recover from the damage done to her national pride by the events of World War II. She continues to proclaim through her actions that she will never again be manipulated by foreign powers.

The United States, as one of the world's two superpowers during the Cold War and now as the only superpower, naturally poses a threat by virtue of her relative strength. In any American-French military interaction, the potential exists for American hegemony which, in turn, menaces French freedom of action, threat number one.

President de Gaulle perceived a threat to French freedom of action stemming from American hegemony in the management of NATO. His resentment of Anglo-American domination of the organization led to French partial withdrawal in 1966. In Operation El Dorado Canyon in 1986, France's refusal to cooperate was partly due to American encroachment upon her freedom of action. The French resented the 'just nod your head yes' approach by the Americans the day before the proposed airstrike against Libya, hence no cooperation. In Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1990-91, the French resented the 'just get on the Coalition bandwagon' impression they perceived from the United States, hence the unilateral French effort to resolve the problem, and then the initially faltering military cooperation. In Operation Provide Comfort in 1991, marked efforts were made to accommodate France. Her freedom of

action relatively better respected, she did not make any passionate displays of independence. In Operations Turquoise and Support Hope in 1994, the United States threatened her freedom of action twice: when the American journalists, among others, criticized the French plan to intervene in Rwanda, France intervened nonetheless; and when President Clinton, among others, asked the French to remain in Rwanda beyond the United Nations' deadline, the answer was an unequivocal no.

The second threat generally present from the outset of opportunities for American-French military cooperation will be that which prompts the potential cooperation in the first place. Examples from the four case studies include Libyan sponsored terrorism, potentially reduced access to Gulf oil, violation of minority rights, and civil strife in Africa. The establishment up front of these two threats--the threat to France's freedom of action and the threat posed by the international crisis at hand--nicely creates the conditions under which the Balance of Threat Theory can be applied.

The theory seems less applicable to countries more confident in or less concerned with their prestige. The United Kingdom, for instance, emerged from World War II a significantly diminished power. However, her "special relationship" with the United States served to buoy her international standing. Only recently has that special relationship come into question as the Clinton Administration attempts to involve itself in resolution of the Anglo-Irish impasse. In the absence of any ardent drive to reestablish past glory, Britain's military cooperation or non cooperation with the United States is not as easily explained in terms of the Balance of Threat Theory.

Given the applicability of the Balance of Threat Theory to the study of France's military cooperation, the enlightened American strategist should be better able to craft successful requests for French cooperation. The approach that fails to consider the sensitivity of France to her freedom of action is destined to fail. Conversely, the intelligently crafted approach, which considers not only French interests but the potential manner in which third parties might construe France's cooperation with the United States, is more likely to succeed.

Recommendations for Further Inquiry

The study has pointed to three related areas suitable for further inquiry. The first involves a more detailed analysis of the relatively greater extent of American-French military cooperation in Operation Provide Comfort (Phase I). The second concerns the impact of upcoming changes in French defense, such as spending reductions and acquisition of a strategic airlifter, on French willingness to cooperate with American military forces. The final, closely related area for further study would be French aims in NATO.

The first area for further inquiry is based upon the question, why was American-French military cooperation seemingly so much smoother in Operation Provide Comfort than in similar operations? Research indicates American military leadership in the operation was more accommodating of French national interests, but yields little in the way of specific, substantive examples. The significance is one of modeling future combined operations.

The second area for further inquiry regards the impact of new French defense developments on France's willingness to cooperate as an

American military ally. First, will the substantial defense cuts recently announced by President Chirac translate into another obstacle in France's military cooperation with the United States? If so, to what extent? Also, if ongoing German-French collaboration on a strategic airlifter eventually yields strategic lift aircraft, will France be even less inclined to cooperate as an American military ally? Presently, French dependence upon American strategic lift provides some degree of leverage with France.

The third area for further inquiry concerns recently announced French intentions to join NATO as a full partner. Questions which naturally come to mind include: Why does France now want full NATO membership? What are her likely aims in NATO? Will she attempt to reduce American influence in NATO? Is France's desire to become a full NATO member related to the seemingly ineffective nature of alternative European defense arrangements? Each of these three areas for further inquiry will shed even more light on the question of France's reliability as an American military ally.

Just as opportunities for American-French military cooperation have arisen over the past two centuries, they will continue to do so in the future. American strategists, both political and military, can apply the proposed conditions for cooperation and non cooperation as well as the Balance of Threat Theory to future such situations. In doing so, they will be able to assess more astutely the prospect of French cooperation in future military operations. Moreover, they will be able to craft more effective requests for French military cooperation in the future.

Endnotes

¹Craig Covault, "New Telecom 2C Satellite to Bolster Bosnian Links," Aviation Week and Space Technology, 11 December 1995, 28.

²David A. Fulghum, "Bosnia Watch to Intensify," Aviation Week and Space Technology, 12 February 1996, 58-59.

³"French Support Bosnian Elint Ops," Aviation Week and Space Technology, 14 Aug 1995, 23.

⁴Craig Covault, "Carriers Critical to Bosnian Recon," Aviation Week and Space Technology, 28 February 1994, 27-28.

⁵Gail Russell Chaddock, "Europe Puts Its Stamp on Bosnia," Christian Science Monitor, 14 December 1995, 1.

⁶Barbara Starr, "NATO Must Solve Bosnia Zone Riddle Before Forces Deploy," Jane's Defense Weekly, 21 October 1995, 21.

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